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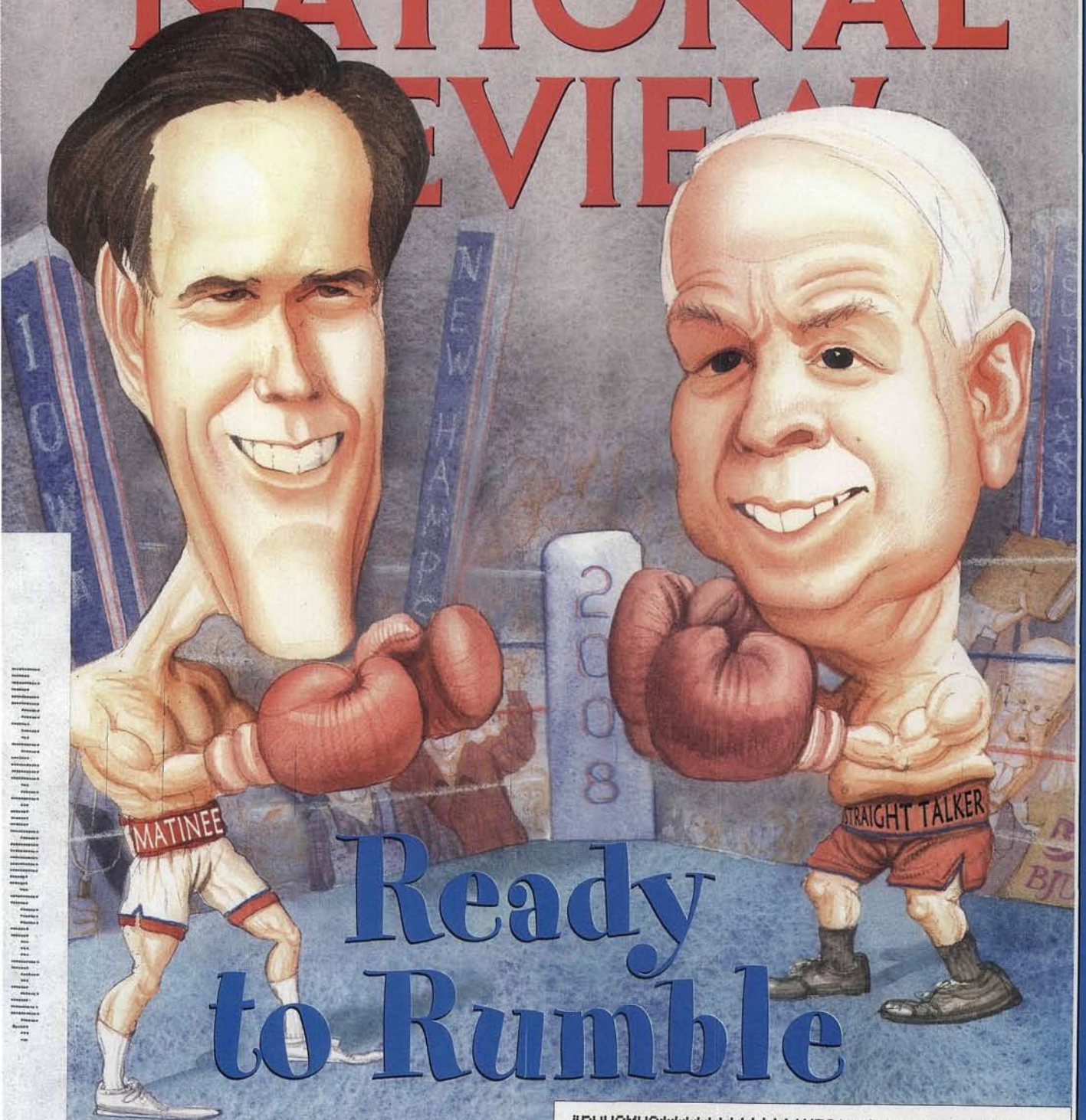

Ready to Rumble

… the early states, it's McCain v. Romney

by Jonathan Martin

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DECEMBER 31, 2006 VOL. LVIII, NO. 24

NATIONAL REVIEW

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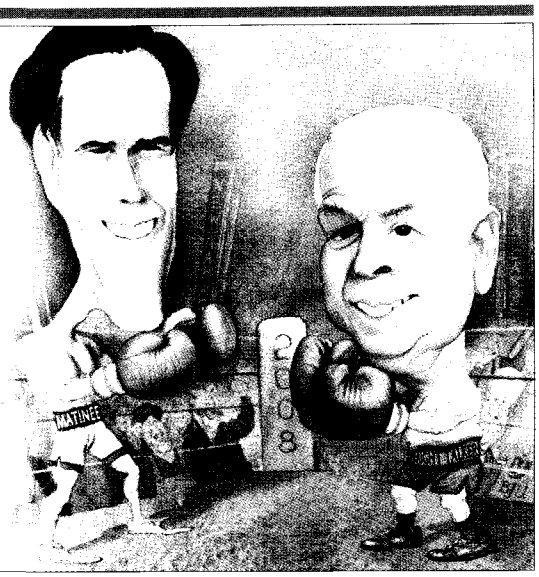
■ COVER STORY

GOP Duel

Page 30

On the Republican side, the upcoming presidential campaign increasingly appears to be dominated by just two men, Mitt Romney and John McCain. Though neither has officially declared his candidacy, the Mormon and the Maverick stand apart in their organizational strength heading into the "invisible primary" of 2007. *By Jonathan Martin*



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letters to the editor

RUDOLPH THE RED-STATE CANDIDATE?

In "A Vote for Rudy" (Dec. 18), Richard Brookhiser advocates making Rudolph Giuliani the 2008 Republican presidential nominee. In fact, the former mayor would likely be a disaster for the party, and for conservatives. This is true for both political and ideological reasons.

The Democrats would make hay out of Giuliani's personal life. And even if he could get elected, there is no guarantee that he would be faithful to conservative principles. If he shared the government with a Democratic Congress, his anti-gun and pro-abortion stances could do serious harm—especially if he had a Supreme Court vacancy to fill.

William Miller
Columbus, Ga.

EVERYONE'S A CRITIC

Ross Douthat's recommendation of *The Departed* ("Crowd-Pleaser," Nov. 6) was wide of the mark. The film has no redeeming value. It is a snuff flick filled with gratuitous foul language and false images of life in a great city. It especially misrepresents Boston's law-enforcement agencies.

Does Douthat even consider whether the films he recommends uphold any values or truth at all? If he believes that movies ought to provide nothing but entertainment, then I question why this entertainment must come as an endless string of murders and epithets.

Larry Stirling
San Diego, Calif.

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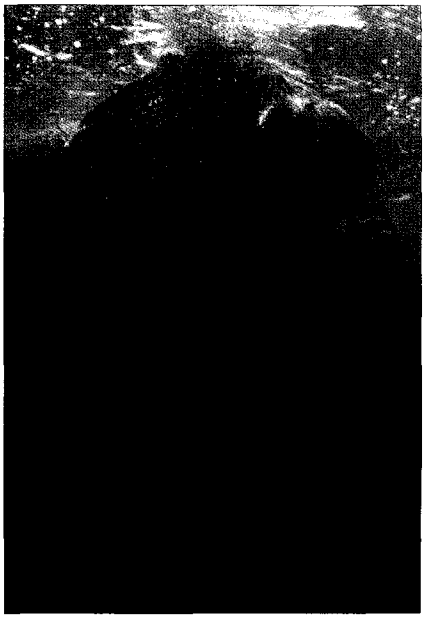
AN ADMONISHMENT

Initially, Ramesh Ponnuru's words in "The Way Back" (Dec. 4) seem harmless. He closes his piece by admonishing conservatives to "maintain their principles" as they react to November's electoral thumping. But the rest of the article is dominated by a discussion of shallow political tactics.



We all know winning elections is important, and always urgent. But along that path, NR can't allow us to lose sight of the bigger picture. Years ago, Whittaker Chambers felt compelled to remind a young William F. Buckley Jr. that, "in defining positions in principle, one always risks losing, anticipates losing, the fuzzy, the foggy, the faint-hearted, the geese, etc. But in this matter, I have never abandoned Lenin's phrasing of it: '*Luchshe menshe, no luchshe*'—Better less, but better. Besides, the best of those who fall away at first impact, reconsider and return, clarified and strengthened on the point of principle. And that, precisely, is a function of a journal of opinion."

NR must continue uncompromisingly to articulate the principles that founded and have sustained this nation.

Gerald K. Masters
Newark, N.Y.

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A balanced energy approach

As Americans talk about our energy future, the conversation naturally turns to the need for future supplies to sustain a growing American economy. The federal Energy Information Administration (EIA) projects that even with a significant increase in energy efficiency and alternatives, Americans will still use 28 million barrels of oil a day in 2030 – a 34 percent increase from today.

Where will we get that oil? We need to have a balanced energy approach. We should look first here at home. The government estimates some 31 billion barrels of undiscovered, technically recoverable oil are available on federal lands currently closed to development. That's more than enough oil to power 35 million cars and heat 14 million homes for 30 years.

A Message From

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THE WEEK

■ Are we allowed to be against Obama?

■ Running for the Senate in 1994, Mitt Romney pledged to work for "full equality for America's gay and lesbian citizens" and argued that he would be a more effective champion of this cause than Ted Kennedy. He pledged to co-sponsor a federal ban on discrimination against homosexuals in employment, housing, and credit. He supported President Clinton's "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, and looked forward to the day that homosexuals could "serve openly and honestly in our nation's military." What should social conservatives, whom Romney has been courting as part of his presidential campaign, make of these facts? That depends. Presumably Romney still believes, as he should, that gays deserve "full equality." Since Romney also said, in 1994, that the law should recognize marriage as the union of a man and a woman, he evidently thought that the traditional marriage laws were compatible with full equality—and still believes it. It would be entirely plausible for Romney to explain that the experience of fighting the judicial imposition of same-sex marriage has given him a new perspective on some of these issues. Perhaps he had considered employment discrimination as a discrete issue, for example, but has come to see it as one front in a campaign to force the unwilling to look favorably on homosexuality. Or perhaps he has just changed his mind. A lot of primary voters are looking forward to hearing Romney's explanation.

■ John Bolton's tenure as U.N. ambassador was both a diplomatic and a moral success. He shone the spotlight on the atrocities in Darfur at a time when the world was inclined to forget them. He eloquently and persistently made the case against Iran's nuclear program. He got the Security Council to pass a resolution sanctioning North Korea for its nuclear test, and put as much pressure as any man could on China actually to enforce it. All of this caps a long career of diplomatic achievements. On proliferation issues in particular he has been visionary. The Proliferation Security Initiative—a vital tool for interdicting shipments of illicit arms—is his creation. His resignation is a loss for the United States and the U.N., and an ignominy upon the senators who blocked his confirmation the better to savage President Bush's foreign policy.

■ Jimmy Carter's latest book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, provoked political scientist Kenneth Stein to resign his fellowship at the Carter Center. We were already resigned to Carter's behavior in the Middle East, and in general. His signal achievement as president was to broker peace between Israel and Egypt; he has spent the rest of his life since trying to pull the same rabbit out of every hat. Where Israel and the Palestinians are concerned, he displays the structural anti-

A picture of Putin *(see page 10)*

ROMAN GENN

Semitism of the professional peacemaker. If one's goal is progress toward peace, and if the Palestinians make no real concessions, then progress can come only from Israel—which becomes the object of the peacemaker's wrath whenever it balks. Now Carter, who as an election observer has certified grotesquely corrupt Palestinian contests, compares Israel to the South African apartheid state. Our 39th president has gone from being a misguided idealist to being an ugly crank.

■ Has there ever been a sadder failure, even at the United Nations, than retiring secretary general Kofi Annan? Consider him on his own terms. In one of his farewell speeches, this one in honor of International Human Rights Day, he deplored mass murder in Darfur. "Sixty years after the liberation of the Nazi death camps, and 30 years after the Cambodian killing fields, the promise of 'never again' is ringing hollow." But how could this impotent organization, including all the world's tyrants and despots, do anything constructive in Darfur, or anywhere else? Only the United States and a coalition of the willing could make good Annan's human-

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PRESIDENT BUSH:

EVERY MOMENT WE WAIT TO STOP THE GENOCIDE, MORE INNOCENT PEOPLE DIE IN DARFUR.

Despite all of your diplomatic efforts, innocent men, women and children continue to be killed in a conflict that's quickly spreading beyond the borders of Sudan. A strong, UN-led peacekeeping force will protect the people, contain the violence and re-energize the peace process. In order to be effective, this force will need:

1. An explicit mandate to protect civilians.
2. Rules of engagement permitting the use of force to save lives.
3. Command and control arrangements allowing necessary and timely military action without approval from distant authorities.

This will not require American troops, but it will require America's help. The African Union, United Nations and humanitarian aid community must have the resources and support to undertake this difficult mission to save Darfur — before it's too late.

PRESIDENT BUSH: YOU MUST DO MORE. | **www.SaveDarfur.org**

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THE WEEK...

rights talk. But all he offered in return was international oversight and demands for money. As a result, nations good and bad pursued their own agendas. With nothing better to do, the U.N. sank into corruption, as exemplified most flagrantly by the Oil for Food program in Iraq. One of George W. Bush's greatest failings was to take this tainted sad sack and the organization he presided over so seriously.

■ Mary Cheney is having a baby, to be raised by her and her longtime lesbian partner. From one angle, this decision seems to combine some of the problematic aspects of both in vitro fertilization and single motherhood: It's a deliberate choice to create a child without a (custodial) father. Any such judgment must, however, be tempered. This sort of thing happens routinely in our culture, which neither Ms. Cheney nor her partner created; the child will presumably have a loving and stable home, which many other children don't. We cannot approve, but we wish all three of them well.

■ Sen. Evan Bayh of Indiana has joined Iowa governor Tom Vilsack in making his bid for the 2008 Democratic nomination official by forming a presidential exploratory committee. During his two terms as governor and for most of his eight years in the Senate, Bayh charted a moderate course. But he has recently tacked left. He voted against the confirmation of Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito. He has repudiated his vote for the Iraq War, claiming to have been misled by the administration. After supporting many free-trade agreements, he opposed CAFTA last year. What happened? In 1996, Bayh was featured at the Democratic convention as a moderate rising star. But in 2000, feminists blackballed him as a vice-presidential candidate because he opposes partial-birth abortion. Evidently he is determined not to be left out again.

■ It's a good thing Nancy Pelosi and her House Democrats aren't part of the "culture of corruption" they condemned so often during the recent campaign. Otherwise, we would be worried about the reelection of Louisiana Democrat William "Cold Cash" Jefferson, the man accused of stashing $90,000 in bribe money in his freezer. If we didn't know better, we would think that was a sign of, you know, corruption. And if we weren't so sure that Democrats are ethically above reproach, we'd also be worried about Rep. Alcee Hastings, who nearly became chairman of the House Intelligence Committee even though he was impeached and convicted for soliciting bribes while a federal judge. We'd also be a little nervous about Rep. John Murtha, the get-out-of-Iraq hero of the Left, whose Abscam past—he was an unindicted co-conspirator—and habit of directing big-money earmarks to political supporters became issues when he ran for House majority leader. And now that you mention it, we'd be worried about Rep. Alan Mollohan, whose net worth went from $500,000 to more than $6 million after four years of real-estate deals with a friend who benefited from Mollohan's legislation. Yes, it's a good thing Speaker-to-be Pelosi has assured us that she will run "the most honest, most open, and most ethical Congress in history." No need to worry.

■ Treasury secretary Henry Paulson is trying to get Democrats to reach a deal with the administration on Social Security. Toward this end, the administration has tacitly dropped the idea of personal savings accounts. We are inclined to bless the administration's efforts while keeping a watchful eye on them. It is possible to envision a reform that, while eschewing personal accounts, slows the growth of benefits and provides tax breaks for low-income workers to begin accumulating capital. To get that kind of deal, however, Bush and Paulson will have to be shrewd, tough, and lucky.

■ The Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act would require abortionists to inform patients that an unborn child at 20 weeks' gestation may feel pain, and to offer anesthesia for the child if the woman requests it. The bill split the abortion lobby, with Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Federation opposed and NARAL Pro-Choice America neutral. The House voted for the bill 250–162, but it needed two-thirds support to pass. There are federal laws that restrict the cruelty with which animals can be slaughtered. Unborn children have no such protection.

■ In November, six imams were supposed to fly on US Airways from Minneapolis to Phoenix. Before the flight, they were loudly praying in the terminal, erupting occasionally in cries of "Allah!" On the plane, they did not all sit in their assigned seats; two sat in the front, two in the middle, and two in the back—an arrangement similar to that of the 9/11 hijackers. Two asked for seatbelt extensions; neither appeared overweight, and each put his extension on the floor. They were heard condemning the U.S. and speaking of Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. Predictably and understandably, they were

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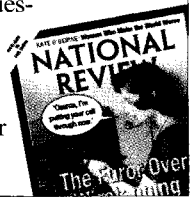

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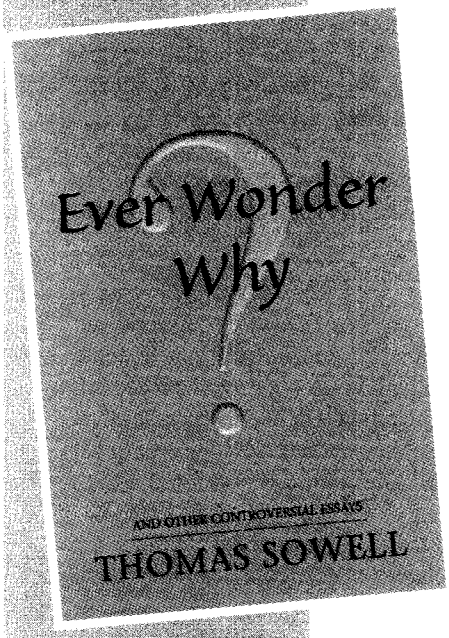

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- The confusion between equal opportunity and equal results that resides behind many kinds of "spoiled brat politics"
- The "mealy mouth media" that calls terrorists "insurgents" and rioters "demonstrators"
- How "the idiocy of relevance" in learning has been particularly destructive in the education of minority students at all levels

Thomas Sowell *is the Rose and Milton Friedman Senior Fellow on Public Policy at the Hoover Institution. His nationally syndicated column is carried in 150 newspapers across the country.*

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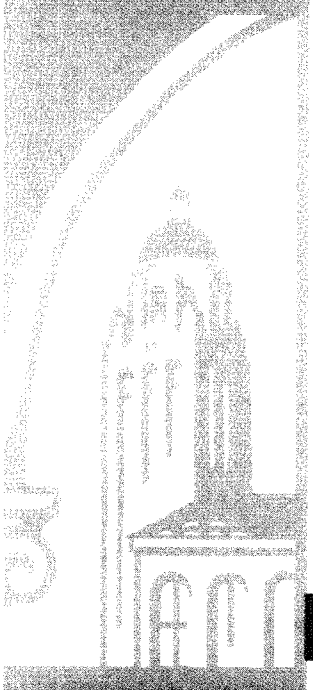

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THE WEEK...

escorted off the flight by federal air marshals. Shortly thereafter, they were complaining to the media under the guidance of legal support provided by CAIR. Thus far, US Airways has concluded that the imams' behavior was suspicious, and their removal proper. If their intent was to provoke a multitude of stories about discrimination against Muslims, they couldn't have done better than this. Certainly not all Muslims are terrorists; certainly some are provocative fools.

■ Nobody denies that the public schools in Louisville and Seattle discriminate against students on the basis of their skin color. The question that the Supreme Court must now address, after hearing oral arguments in two cases on December 4, is whether they have the right to do so. In 2003, a 5–4 Supreme Court decision permitted the University of Michigan to keep using an admissions procedure that is hard to distinguish from a racial-quota system. Last month, however, Michigan voters revolted against government-sponsored bean counting when they overwhelmingly approved a referendum that outlaws racial preferences. The Supreme Court of 2006, which has Samuel Alito in place of Sandra Day O'Connor, should take a cue from this blue-state majority, as well as from the true-blue voters of California and Washington, who in the late 1990s also rejected color coding. More important, the justices should look to the law, which rejects the idea that the schoolhouse door should swing open or slam shut for someone simply because of how he matches up on a bureaucrat's color wheel.

■ The Citizenship and Immigration Service has announced a plan to overhaul the civics and history test that most immigrants

Flight from Russia

WHEN Alexander Litvinenko was asked on his deathbed who was behind his poisoning, he fingered Vladimir Putin. While the dots linking Putin to the polonium poisoning will probably never be connected, Litvinenko's death is part of a pattern. Political opponents of Putin have had a terrible sequence of unfortunate events.

While Russia liberalized effectively under Boris Yeltsin, it began to head south in earnest on July 2, 2003, when Moscow police arrested Platon Lebedev, a principal shareholder in a holding company that was the majority owner of oil giant Yukos. On October 25 of that same year, Russian security agents arrested Mikhail Khodorkovsky and placed him in prison. Khodorkovsky, who was outspoken politically, was ultimately put in a Siberian prison with a nine-year sentence. Yukos is now controlled by a Putin crony.

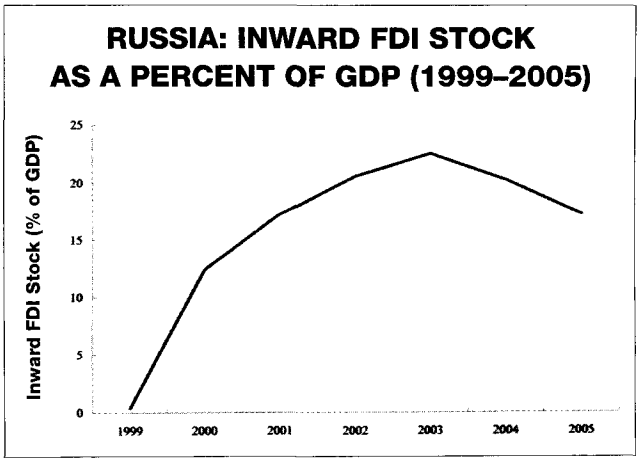
Lebedev and Khodorkovsky were hardly the only opponents of Putin to have a run of bad luck. Heroic journalist Anna Politkovskaya was shot before she could get to the bottom of what appears to be a terrible scandal involving the Russian handling of Chechnya. Pro-Western Ukrainian leader Viktor Yushchenko was poisoned with dioxin (and survived). Litvinenko's compatriot Dmitri Kovtun now also seems to have been poisoned.

While these human tragedies have played out, Russia has also behaved poorly toward Western multinationals. My colleague Leon Aron reported recently that "the Kremlin halted or threatened to halt operations" by a series of companies including Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil, and Total. Aron adds that "it is an open secret in Moscow that the government's prime motive is to pressure the companies into either surrendering a share of production to the state or handing back their development licenses."

Russia is woefully underdeveloped given its human and natural resources. Its GDP per capita in 2005 was less than a third of Slovenia's, less than half that of Hungary, and only a smidgen above that of impoverished Romania. Russia is in desperate need of foreign resources to finance its development.

But the economic literature has shown that foreign capital flows to places that have a high level of economic freedom. Capital markets are a far more efficient deliverer of justice than any court. They punish dictators, and reward stability. Putin's actions should, the literature suggests, do enormous harm to the Russian economy.

While recent high oil prices may have given Russia some time, the nearby chart indicates that foreign capitalists have



indeed taken note of Russian turmoil and headed for the exits. Foreign direct investment as a share of GDP, while remaining far below levels seen by other former Soviet-bloc countries, climbed steadily until 2003. Since 2003, it has plummeted. The turning point in the chart begins almost exactly when the Yukos affair began.

This means that Russia is paying an enormous economic cost for Putin's thuggishness. Given the latest publicity, one should expect this trend to accelerate sharply. Without foreign capital flows, the Russian economy will stagnate, and Russians will fall farther and farther behind their neighbors. Russians are about to find out that corruption and cronyism look a lot like Communism.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT

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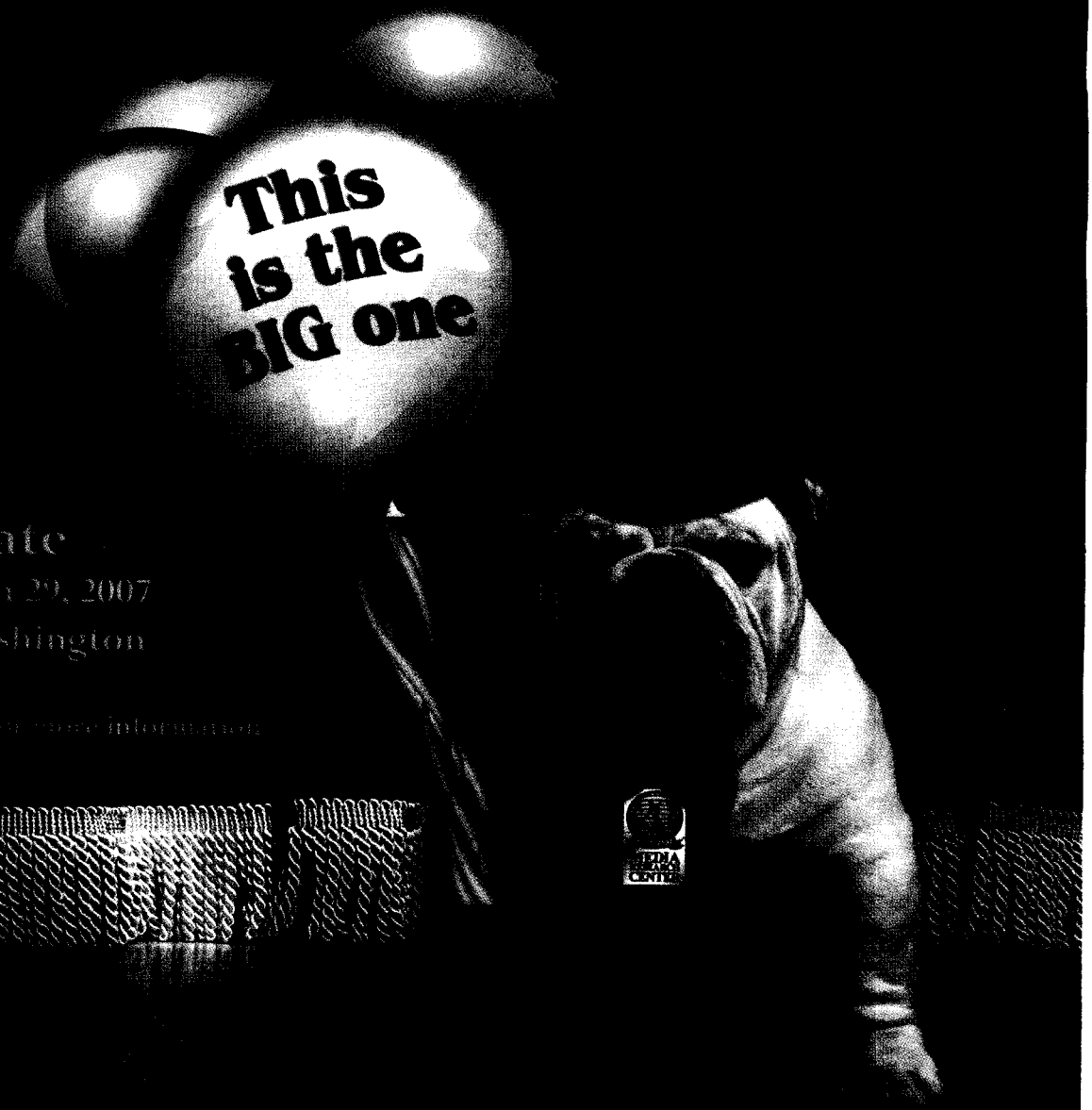

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THE WEEK...

must pass before becoming citizens. Immigrant-rights groups are already complaining that the revisions make the test too hard. No longer will it be possible to memorize the answers to a list of 100 widely available questions. Instead, naturalization applicants will have to learn both facts and concepts. On the old exam, for instance, would-be citizens might be asked to name the year the Declaration of Independence was written—essentially a piece of trivia. A potential question on the new exam, by contrast, asks them to identify an important idea found in the document. This is not a difficult task; the point isn't to flunk the foreign-born so much as to encourage their assimilation.

■ Natan Sharansky, then Anatoly Sharansky, was one of the bravest and most inspiring of all Soviet dissidents. His Gulag memoir, *Fear No Evil*, is one of the classics of the literature. In Israel, he has continued to champion human rights, and to argue tirelessly for the benefits of freedom. Paul Johnson is the genius historian and journalist from Britain. WFB once said that his greatness is subject to being overlooked, so consistent and routine is it. President Bush has not overlooked it. He has awarded Johnson the Medal of Freedom, as he has that other foreigner, Sharansky. Still another recipient of the award this year is William Safire, who was for decades an anti-Communist voice on the *New York Times* op-ed page. He had that view pretty much all to himself. In his 2006 selections, President Bush has performed brilliantly.

NATAN SHARANSKY · GIL COHEN MAGEN/REUTERS

■ "Anal" is a term of Freudian psychoanalysis, suggesting the infant's fascination with excrement. Like "existentialism" or "doo-wop," it has a rather Fifties ring. But what other term can we apply to New York mayor Michael Bloomberg? If he is not yet actually checking our egresses, he is certainly obsessed with our ingresses. The Bloomberg administration's latest directive has been a ban on trans fats, artificial chemicals used in cooking oils and shortenings. Trans fats cause "bad" cholesterol, which probably is bad. But they also seem to be able to pry open New Yorkers' jaws and jump down their gullets, hence the ban. Why not cut to the chase, and fit us all with meters fore and aft, connected to monitors at City Hall? By concentrating all indignities in one package, it will spare us further ones, and give Mayor Bloomberg an endless source of activity and pleasure.

■ In late November, U.S. district judge James Robertson ruled that the Treasury Department has unfairly discriminated against the vision-impaired. The crime? It's all in the money. Per Judge Robertson's royal decree, American currency must be modified so that the blind may distinguish note from note, Washington from Franklin. In his myopic ruling, Judge Robertson invoked foreign example, demanding we follow the way of the rest of the world. Most of the innovations noted in his ruling are quite reasonable—raised numerals and perforated dots as tactile clues to denomination—yet his presumption still astounds. What of the 7 million vending machines in the country not capable of reading new bills? What of the hundreds of millions in costs to design and print the new currency, and to inform the public of the changes? What of his duty to judge, not to legislate by fiat? If Justice is blind, Judge Robertson must be her lead-boy.

■ The extraordinary murder of Alexander Litvinenko in London by polonium 210 becomes curiouser and curiouser, to borrow from Lewis Carroll. Traces of polonium 210 have been detected in the hotel and the restaurant where Litvinenko may have been slipped the lethal radioactive material. More traces have been found in aircraft flying between Moscow and London, and in places where the murder trail seemingly leads, including the British embassy in Moscow and an apartment in Hamburg. Dmitri Kovtun, who rented that apartment, is one minute declared to be seriously contaminated, the next minute fine. Similarly with Andrei Lugovoi, who like Kovtun met Litvinenko on the day he first felt the effects of the poisoning. Someone by the name of Mikhail Trepashkin claims to know who did the murder, but he is serving a sentence in a prison in the Urals for betraying state secrets, and cannot be interviewed. Every one of these men happens to be an ex-KGB officer, as was Litvinenko. Nobody can tell who is a victim, who a perpetrator. British detectives are being given the runaround in Moscow, while Russian officials propose to interview and probably extradite Russian exiles in London whom they think are suspects. Former defectors and dissidents of the stature of Oleg Gordievsky and Vladimir Bukovsky do not hesitate to point a finger at the Kremlin. There are more theories about the murder than hard facts, and probably always will be. But Litvinenko's fate offers unforgettable insight into the darkness of today's Russia.

■ Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad specializes in hatred, and he is extremely skillful at arousing it. A stunt entirely characteristic of the man is the conference in Tehran called to discuss whether the Jews really suffered genocide at

THE CLINTONS CRANK UP

Obama got them off the dime.
It wasn't that the time was prime,
And, please, forget about the stars:
When crowds engulfed Obama's cars,
Tore at his shirts and proffered books
To get his autograph, the looks—
I wasn't there, but those who were
Say no one dared to query her.

—W. H. VON DREELE

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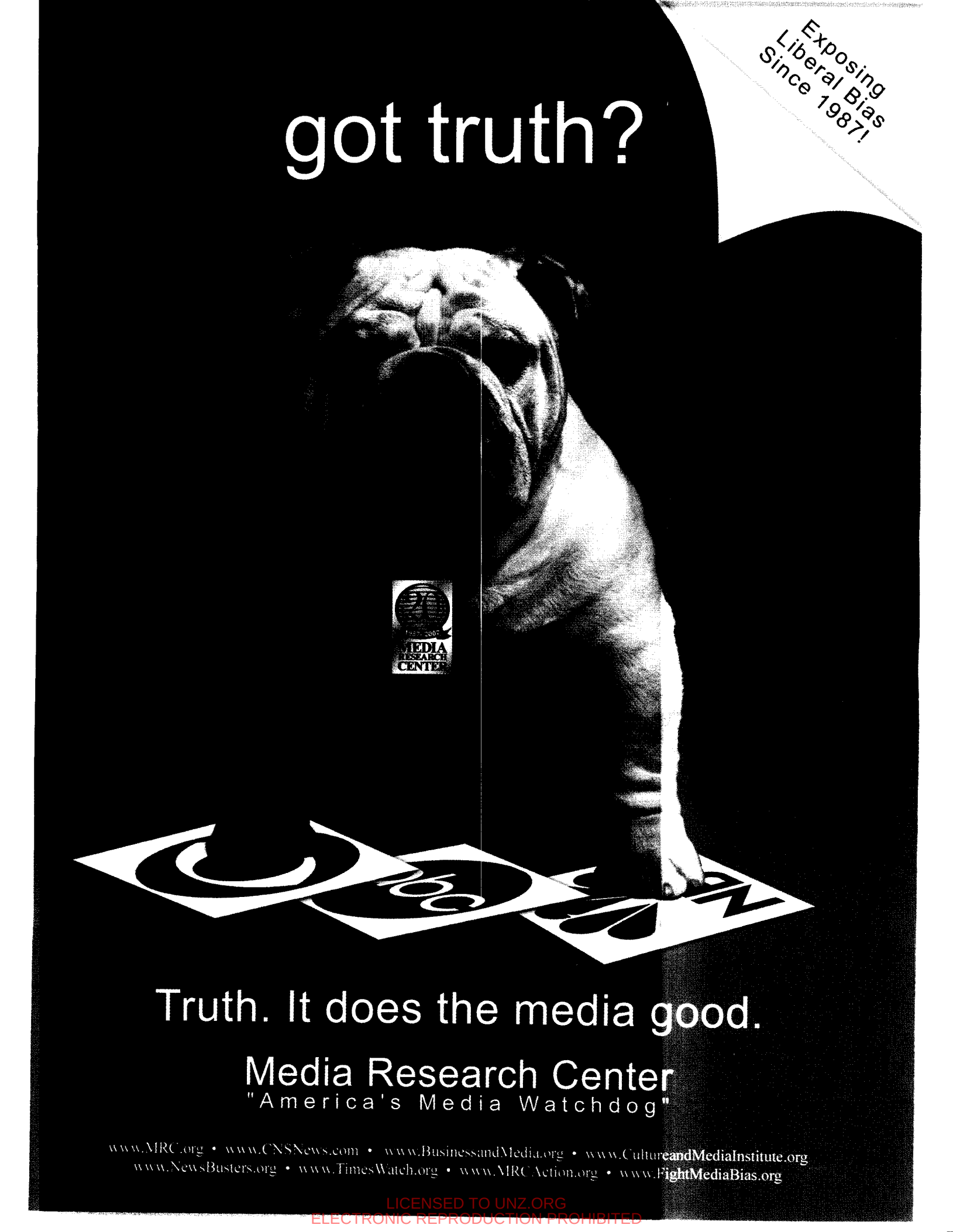
got truth?



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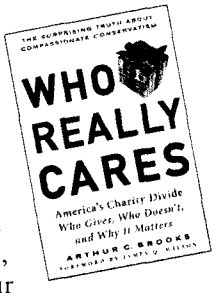
THE WEEK...

the hands of the Nazis. Some 67 of the most unpleasant people in the world accepted his invitation to agree with him that the Holocaust is "exaggerated" and a "myth." The only one missing from this Nazi-minded company is the British writer David Irving, who happens to be in an Austrian prison precisely for Holocaust denial. The purported aim of the conference, according to its spokesman, is "to scientifically study the Holocaust and listen to both sides before reaching a conclusion." In reality, the aim is to psych up the unfortunate Iranian masses for the heralded showdown with the West. Israel in particular is to be wiped off the map. The Iranians are denying one holocaust while proposing another.

■ When a horde of enraged Muslims gathers to protest some offense or other, it is not uncommon to see signs prescribing death for those who insult Islam. There is a temptation to assume that "death" is meant in a figurative sense. In Somalia at least, where a federation of fundamentalist Muslim courts has taken over much of the country, the literal interpretation is borne out. The Islamic court in the town of Bulo Burto has ruled that residents who do not pray five times a day will be beheaded. They "will definitely be beheaded according to Islamic law," said the chairman of the court, Sheik Hussein Barre Rage. Between emigration and beheadings, this town does not seem destined to last.

■ The European Union has an executive, the European Commission; the commission has a president; and the president has several vice presidents, each one a commissioner for some policy area. One of those vice presidents, and therefore a very big wheel in the Euro-bureaucracy, is 62-year-old Günther Verheugen, a German. Herr Verheugen appointed 48-year-old Petra Erler to be his chief of staff, a position carrying a $184,000 salary. Now Herr Verheugen and Fraulein Erler have been photographed enjoying a nudist beach in Lithuania, with only a single baseball cap as apparel for the two of them. Has the vice president been guilty of an impropriety? We are content to await the judgment of his peers. In the meantime, we would much prefer not to have to think about expense-account-fed German bureaucrats aged 62 and 48 disporting themselves in the altogether on the windswept beaches of the Baltic.



■ Since the days of Charles Dickens, conservatives have been caricatured as Scrooges for their supposed indifference to the suffering of the poor. At the same time, liberals have smugly trumpeted their own generosity in supporting expensive government welfare programs. But in a new book, *Who Really Cares?*, Syracuse University professor Arthur Brooks challenges this conventional wisdom. Judging by private charity, he says, it's conservatives who are more compassionate. Each year, conservatives give 30 percent more than liberals to charity. Religious people, especially, are remarkably generous: Believers are 57 percent more likely than secularists to help the homeless. There are two lessons here: As modern liberalism has come to equate compassion with large-scale government programs, it has eroded the sense of individual responsibility for the well-being of one's neighbors. And when conservatives say that low taxes and spending should be supplemented by a safety net that is privately funded, they put their money where their mouth is.

■ We have long lamented that, while our nation's campuses are supposed to be bastions of free inquiry and open debate, their postmodern stewards have transformed them into pens of political correctness and petty authoritarianism. A recent study reveals just how bad the problem is: The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education has reported that an overwhelming majority of colleges and universities (including more than 73 percent of public schools) ban speech that is protected under the First Amendment. Disguised as "harassment policies" and "sensitivity guidelines," campus speech codes routinely ban "offensiveness," "disrespect," and "inappropriate comments." Of course, the vagueness and subjectivity of these prohibitions allow them to be selectively applied against viewpoints that contravene the prevailing orthodoxies of the academy. At public universities, these speech codes may be unconstitutional. At private schools, they often contradict mission statements and advertisements that promise to uphold free expression. So the sad irony remains: If you want to have an uninhibited conversation about a controversial topic today, you'd better avoid college campuses.

■ The fine city of Houston boasts a landscaping business named Garden Guy, run by Sabrina Farber and her husband, both devout Christians. Michael Lord and Gary Lackey are a homosexual couple who have set up house together in that same city. When Lord and Lackey invited Garden Guy to bid for a landscaping job at their home, Mrs. Farber replied by e-mail: "I need to tell you that we cannot meet with you because we choose not to work for homosexuals." Predictable screams of outrage followed; then, as the story spread around the Internet, threats to the Farbers and their five children. How dare the Farbers choose not to do business with people they regard as being grossly sinful? What do they think this is, a free country? The Farbers were denounced by no less than the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, who thundered from their head office in Harrisburg, Pa., that "this conduct does not conform to the policy and practice of APLD" . . . thus proving once again that America's corporations and trade associations are to be numbered among the keenest enforcers of "diversity" and multicultural dogmas, and are in league with the bitterest enemies of our ancient liberties.

■ Young Bob Averill, a student at the Art Institute of Portland, Ore., was expelled from that institution for offending another student by challenging her religious beliefs. Mr. Averill, we are not surprised to learn, is an atheist, apparently of the argumentative variety. What was the particular article of faith he challenged? Leprechauns. The young lady he offended is a believer in astral beings, a genus that, according to her, includes the little green-clad faerie folk. Taking umbrage when Mr. Averill

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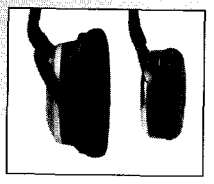

QC2 headphones (left). New QC3 headphones (right).

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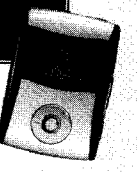

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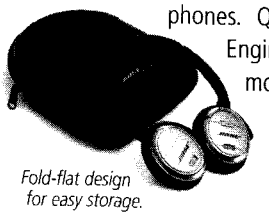

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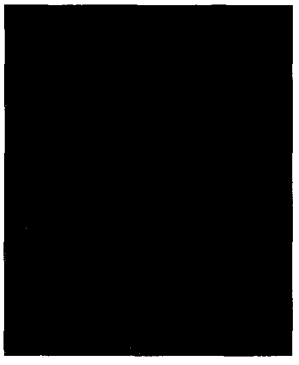
THE WEEK...

pointed to the extreme paucity of scientific evidence for the existence of leprechauns, she made a complaint to the college authorities, and the result followed. What is that merry laughter we hear wafting over from the Emerald Isle?



■ We have for some years been tracking the Turner Prize, given annually by London's Tate Gallery, as a leading indicator of art's decline in the present age. Turner-winning exhibits from recent years have included an empty room in which the lights go on and off, a cow and calf both sliced in half and pickled in formaldehyde, and a shed. Could it be that the trend to ever-wilder absurdity and frivolity in the art world has begun to reverse? Possibly so. This year's Turner Prize went to Tomma Abts, a German lady resident in Britain, for . . . oil paintings on canvas. The paintings are of course perfectly abstract. In fact the artist insists that they have absolutely no meaning, allowing only that each one is "a concentrate of the many paintings underneath, each functioning as an autonomous object revealing the visible traces of its construction." Everyone clear on that? The last artist to win a Turner Prize for paintings, as opposed to "installations" or visual jokes, was Chris Ofili in 1998. Mr. Ofili, however, embellished his productions with elephant dung; Ms. Abts uses *just paint*. Is the art world turning back to actual . . . art? Time will tell.

■ Why did the Neanderthals go extinct more than 20,000 years ago? Scientists may never know for sure, though it almost certainly had something to do with the arrival of modern humans—the big bruisers just couldn't keep up with their smaller cousins, who were better toolmakers and communicators. A new study by the University of Arizona's Steven L. Kuhn and Mary C. Stiner argues that the sexual division of labor also delivered a significant competitive advantage to our ancestors. The development of traditionally female roles involving skill-intensive crafts improved clothing and shelter, for instance, and thereby enhanced the overall fitness of the species. Among Neanderthals, by contrast, males and females appear to have participated in many of the same activities, such as big-game hunting. So the next time feminists say there should never be any difference between the roles of men and women, call them a bunch of paleos who threaten to turn back the clock on social progress.

■ Matt Blunt, the Republican governor of Missouri, issued a kind of preemptive strike on December 4. He sent a memo to department heads of the state government, on the subject of Christmas. Last year, he said, "we heard from those who believe that the Christmas break should be called by a non-religious name such as 'Winter Holiday.'" People "also argued that traditional Christmas greetings such as 'Merry Christmas' should not be used." But employees of the state government "should not have to worry about this matter." They should feel "at ease using traditional holiday phrases, including 'Merry Christmas,'" and "they should have no fear of official reprisal." Of course, the objections of those who are offended by "Merry Christmas" and suchlike should be given "due consideration." But no employee "will be reprimanded or in any way disciplined" for letting the C-word—"Christmas"—escape his lips. "This holiday season should not give state employees reason to feel as though they must check their religious views at the door of a government building," said the governor. Instead, one and all should enjoy the season "with full confidence that their government exists to preserve their liberty rather than constrict it." To which NATIONAL REVIEW can only reply: Holy mackerel.

■ Lincoln University, a school in southeastern Pennsylvania, won a Division III basketball game against Ohio State–Marion 201–78, and is getting flak for running up the score. But not from the losers. Ohio State–Marion is not an NCAA-ranked school; it was plugged in at the last minute when another team bowed out. Their squad consisted of five freshmen and Mark Sisler, their 44-year-old coach, who has two years of college eligibility remaining. Sisler and his son slept in the team van; the other four players shared a motel room. Afterward, Sisler e-mailed the victors: "I personally want you to know that I am not holding any animosity towards you, your student-athletes, or anyone associated with your basketball program. I have no hard feelings for what happened, and my players don't either." Sisler added that the publicity was actually helpful. "I have received many e-mails from prospective students wishing to become a part of our basketball program this year and next." Somewhere Sir Henry Newbolt is nodding: "Play up! Play up! And play the game!"

■ George Trow, longtime *New Yorker* writer, was, on the evidence of his work, a troubled man. Yet he had a desperate grip on a few insights. The things he hated most were mass media and celebrity culture. His finest book, *Within the Context of No Context*, was a jeremiad against television: "No context" was the state created by TV's incessant gabble; willy-nilly, we live "within" it. The historical figures he admired most were Dwight Eisenhower and George Washington. The question he could never answer was, What has happened to manliness in modern America? He wrote about these concerns in prose that was perverse, angry, and deeply sad. R.I.P.

■ The military coup led by Augusto Pinochet in Chile in 1973 deposed a Socialist president, Salvador Allende, who had ruined the economy as a first step in taking his country down Cuba's path. The world would acquire enough Communist regimes in the Seventies; it didn't need another. Pinochet approved market reforms that made Chile prosperous once more. On losing a referendum to extend his power in 1988, he stepped down. These accomplishments shine beside the records of most tyrants, right or left (compare the Argentine generals, or Castro). In one respect, however, Pinochet played to type: He murdered thousands of his opponents, and tortured thousands more. Few criminals save their countries; few saviors are criminals to such an extent. Dead at 91, R.I.P.

TOMMA ABTS

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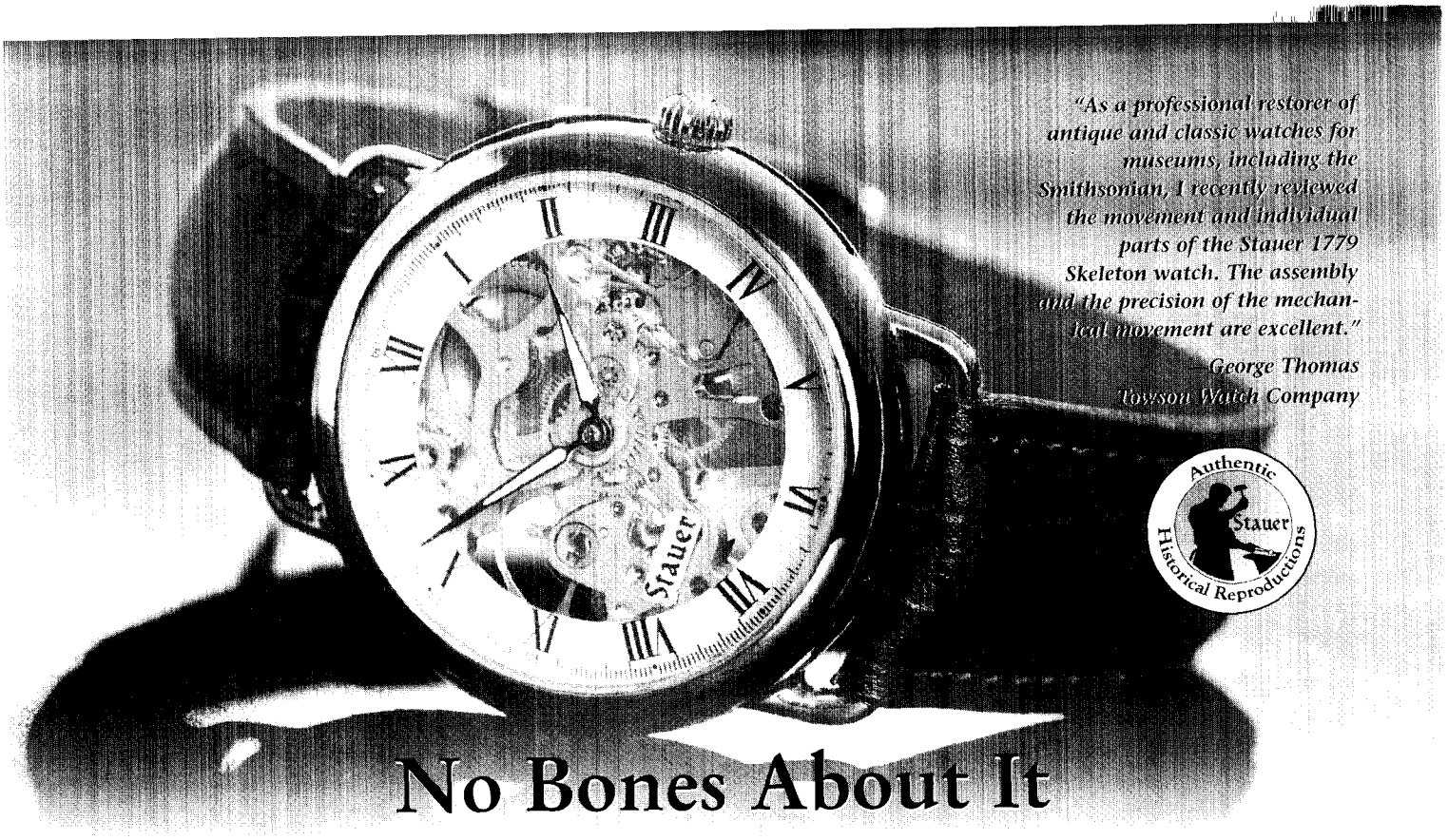

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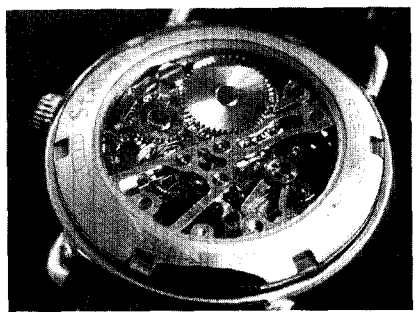

The open exhibition back allows you to further explore the intricate movement and fine craftsmanship.

Beauty is only skin deep but the Engineering Goes Right to the Bone. Intelligent Collectors of vintage mechanical watches have grown bored with mass produced quartz movements. Like fine antique car collectors, they look for authenticity, but they also want practicality from their tiny machines. Inspired by a rare museum piece dating to 1779, we engineered this classic with $31,000,000 worth of precise Swiss built machinery to create the intricate gears and levers. So the historians are thrilled with the authenticity and the demanding engineers are quite impressed with the technical performance.

See All the Way Through. The crystal on the front and the see through exhibition back allow you to observe the gold-fused mainspring, escapement, balance wheel and many of the 20 rubies work in harmony. The balance wheel oscillates at 21,600 times per hour for superb accuracy. The crocodile embossed leather strap adjusts from 6 1/2" to 9" so it will fit practically any wrist. So give it a little wind and the gears roar to life.

The Time Machine. We took the timepiece to George Thomas, a noted historian and watch restorer for museums such as the Smithsonian, and he dissected the 110 parts of the vintage movement. He gave the "1779" top reviews. "It is possible to build it better than the original, and your new skeleton requires so little maintenance." When we shared the price with him, George was stunned. He said that no other luxury skeleton can be had for under $1000. But we pour our money into the watch construction, not into sponsoring yacht races and polo matches. We have been able to keep the price on this collector's limited edition to only three payments of $33.00. So you can wear a piece of watch making history and still keep most of your money in your pocket, not on your wrist. This incredible watch has an attractive price and comes with an exclusive 30-day in-home trial. If you're not completely satisfied with the performance and exquisite detail of this fine timepiece, simply return it for a full refund of your purchase price. There are only 4,999 in the limited edition, so please act quickly. Historical value rarely repeats itself.

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THE WEEK...

■ The public high point of the late Jeane Kirkpatrick's career as Ronald Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations was her appearance before the 1984 Republican convention. NR senior editor Richard Brookhiser was there. "She stepped on all her applause lines, reading in a dry, arrhythmic lecturer's tone. [But] the delegates didn't care; they loved her." After her speech, the host of a reception "made a reference to a 'woman president of the United States.' The crowd cheered; they were ready to nominate her then and there." Why such enthusiasm? Because Kirkpatrick knew that there were evil enemies loose in the world, and that the Democrats, her former party, no longer knew it. "They said that saving Grenada from terror and totalitarianism was the wrong thing to do. They didn't blame Cuba or the Communists for threatening American students and murdering Grenadans. They blamed the United States instead. But then, somehow, they always blame America first." They still do, Madam Ambassador. R.I.P.

AT WAR

Half-Baked

THE report of the Iraq Study Group is being treated by the media as a tablet handed down from on high, but its analytical poverty is making it a non-starter. James Baker and Lee Hamilton managed to corral a group of ten Republican and Democratic worthies behind the report's 79 recommendations—an accomplishment, to be sure, but unfortunately not one that has any connection to improving conditions in Iraq.

The report calls for a pretentiously capitalized New Diplomatic Offensive. The administration should probably be more diplomatically active in the region. The rising threat from Iran makes our Arab allies and quasi-allies even more important to us, and showing more initiative on the Israeli–Palestinian front will placate them in a relatively cost-free way (since nothing is going to come of any talks until the Palestinians are better governed). But the report makes U.S. outreach to Iran and Syria the centerpiece of its diplomatic proposal—sorry, its New Diplomatic Offensive.

Not even Baker and Hamilton pretend to believe that Iran would respond favorably to such an olive branch. In fact, the report says Tehran would likely rebuff the U.S. Baker believes the rebuff would help the world see Iran's rejectionism. Maybe. But anyone paying attention already knows that Iran is rejectionist, and proving it again won't help us in Iraq.

Baker is more impassioned and hopeful about the prospect of "flipping Syria." The report sets out a fanciful path for doing it. We will persuade the Israelis to give back the Golan Heights (not going to happen), in exchange for wide-ranging changes in the behavior and nature of the Syrian regime, up to and including Syrian leaders' basically turning themselves in for their role in the Hariri assassination (not going to happen). Then, somehow all of this will make a big difference in Iraq, where top commanders and our ambassador all say the next four to six months are crucial.

For all the talk of the realism of the ISG report, all of this is just another way to evade truly grappling with the problem on the ground: the lack of security.

Here the report is equally unserious. It calls for beefing up the training of Iraqi forces and gradually removing U.S. combat forces from the fight, until their role is almost eliminated by early 2008. This would make conditions worse. We can train all the Iraqis we like, but the fact remains that we have the only security force in Iraq capable of tamping down the violence. We have failed to impose order partly because we haven't had enough combat forces to "clear" areas of insurgents and, then, to "hold" them to keep the insurgents from returning. The areas where we have maintained enough troops to clear and hold, such as Tal Afar and Fallujah, are relatively stable. Baghdad, where we have never had enough troops, continues to spin out of control.

Without some check on the violence now, Iraq's politics will be further polarized, and reconciliation will be much harder.

The ISG is right to emphasize the importance of political reconciliation to ending the violence in Iraq. But without some check on the violence now, Iraq's politics will be further polarized, and reconciliation will be much harder. The Iraqi army we are trying to train will founder on sectarian divisions, and there will be no Iraq left to reconcile. Our combat troops, then, and any semblance of order they can provide, are key to a political solution. The irony is that the same people who hail the ISG can't stand outgoing defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who has been offering essentially the same military advice as Baker/Hamilton for three years: Draw down U.S. forces to keep the Iraqis from becoming dependent on us and to force them to "pull up their socks."

Bush has already signaled his rejection of the major ISG recommendations. He needs to act decisively and as soon as possible, given that Iraq looks more like the 1990s Balkans every day. His most important task is to secure Baghdad, which will take more troops. Even the ISG report is open to "a short-term redeployment or surge of American combat forces to stabilize Baghdad." Stabilization would require as many as 50,000 more U.S. troops in the city—and probably require new commanders on the ground, too, since Generals Abizaid and Casey are so determinedly Rumsfeldian in their orientation, favoring a light "footprint" over classic counterinsurgency tactics.

A move to send more troops and replace those generals should be packaged with an increase in the size of the U.S. military, accelerated and expanded training of Iraqi security units, steps to get more Iraqis employed, and a greater U.S. intelligence effort on the ground in Iraq. (This last recommendation is included in the ISG report, and is one of many smaller ideas in it that are worth adopting.)

That the ISG failed in its mission is, in the scheme of things, inconsequential. That won't be true if Bush fails in his.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The next issue of NATIONAL REVIEW will appear on Jan. 12.

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■ PUBLIC POLICY ■

Deal or No Deal?

The new, yet eternal, politics of Social Security

RAMESH PONNURU

LOSING the midterm elections may have brought President Bush closer to achieving his goals for Social Security reform. Those goals are to make the program solvent and to expand the "ownership society."

The elections made a bipartisan deal on Social Security more likely in four ways. First, they increased President Bush's incentive to cut one. If he wants a domestic-policy legacy, this is the most likely place for him to find one. Second, they increased his flexibility. During the last Congress, many Republicans insisted that any reform had to include personal savings accounts "carved out" of Social Security: Workers, that is, had to be able to take some of the payroll taxes they pay into the system and invest those funds themselves. That idea didn't get through Congress, largely because Democrats were solidly opposed to "diverting" Social Security money to personal accounts in this manner. Some Republicans still don't see any upside to a reform that lacks personal accounts. But it is obvious that personal accounts can't pass in a Democratic Congress, and the White House seems to have tacitly conceded as much—clearing the way for a deal.

Third, Democrats are no longer worried about losing everything. At the start of 2005, when President Bush began pushing for Social Security reform, they felt marginalized. Their only power in national politics came from their ability to mount filibusters in the Senate, and Republicans were threatening to weaken even that power. Under those circumstances, letting President Bush reform Social Security as the first act of his second term seemed likely to lead to their complete irrelevance. That fear is now gone. Blanket opposition to Bush's plan has already served its purpose: breaking his momentum.

Fourth, Democrats don't have to worry as much about allowing Bush to have achievements, because he is never again going to be the head of the Republican party during an election. By November 2008, the next Republican nominee will be the de facto head of the party. Democrats can work with Bush now while still blasting that nominee.

So the prospects for a deal are looking better. But there are still plenty of obstacles. For one thing, Democrats now think that they have a good shot at winning the whole enchilada—the House, the Senate, and the presidency—in 2008. They may therefore figure that it is better to stiff the president now and impose a Social Security reform entirely on Democratic terms in 2009.

If they're thinking ahead, however, Democrats might conclude that the purely partisan option isn't a smart one. The more they exclude Republicans and rely on Democratic votes to pass a plan, the heavier on tax hikes that plan will be. That would leave them with no Republican votes. Do the Democrats really want to be solely responsible for a big tax increase? Any plan to make the program solvent is going to include some unpopular elements. Neither party has an interest in going alone.

It is entirely possible that Democrats are not looking ahead. They may be assuming, vaguely, that they will deal with Social Security when and if they have to. They spent much of 2005 claiming that the program faced no major problems, and they may now believe it. Pete Stark, the left-wing congressman who will be chairman of a key House subcommittee on entitlements, said just before the election that warnings about Social Security's impending bankruptcy could be dismissed because the program's trustees had been proven too pessimistic. If productivity grows faster than they expect, he said, the program would face no funding problem.

Stark is wrong. Growth would bring more revenues into the system, sure, but it would also increase its expenses. That's because higher growth eventually translates into higher wages, and Social Security benefits are tied to wage levels. The trustees, meanwhile, have sometimes pushed back the date at which they expect Social Security to start bleeding money. But just as often they have pushed it forward. Overall, their predictions have been pretty stable. They have not been consistently over-pessimistic.

Other Democratic delusions could get in the way of a deal. The leading Democratic idea for fixing the program is to "raise the cap." Social Security taxes apply to the first $94,200 in wages. (That's for this year; next year it will apply to the first $97,500.) Any wages above that figure go untaxed. So Democrats want to apply the tax to a larger share of the wages of high earners, and maybe even to tax all wages. A *Washington Post* columnist recently wrote that getting rid of the cap would affect only "the richest 6 percent of taxpayers," and *USA Today* editorialized that it "would fix virtually the entire problem."

Citizens for Tax Justice, a left-wing group, has recently produced a study purporting to prove both of these points. But the group is exaggerating the good that lifting the cap would do, and downplaying its harm. In any one year, the change would affect 6.5 percent of taxpayers. But it would hit more than a fifth of workers with higher

ROGER L. WOLLENBERG/UPI

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taxes over the course of their lives. And it would be a hefty increase. Cesar Conda, a former adviser to Vice President Dick Cheney, points out that the top marginal tax rate is now 38.4 percent. Hitting high earners with taxes for Social Security would raise that figure to 52.9 percent.

For all the pain, the change would make up only a quarter of the program's long-term funding gap. That's partly because, the way the system is set up, people get higher benefits the more taxes they pay in. So raising taxes for high earners would also increase the size of their checks. But even if the link between contributions and benefits were weakened, so that high-wage workers were hit with taxes without getting any corresponding benefits, the new taxes would raise enough money to cover only two-fifths of the shortfall. And weakening that link is more controversial among liberals than you might think: Some of them think that if the program's redistributive nature is made brutally clear to affluent voters, they'll stop supporting the program.

The thought of even a much smaller tax increase makes Republicans gag, of course. They are increasingly receptive to another Democratic idea: offering tax credits to encourage low-income workers to invest. Democrats think increased private investment is fine if it is an "add on" to Social Security rather than a "carve out" from it. Republicans prefer a carve-out, but those who have accepted that they can't get that have concluded that an add-on is the next best thing. Either way, the federal government would be letting some workers invest some of their tax dollars. One of the reasons Republicans wanted personal savings accounts in the first place was to make investors out of people who aren't currently involved in capital markets. Add-on accounts could do that, too.

But there is still a faction of Republicans who reject add-on accounts and even cuts in future benefits. These Republicans believe that carve-out accounts alone can make Social Security solvent, and that Bush ruined their popular idea by talking about slowing the growth of benefits. They would have a strong argument if their numbers added up, but they don't. They say that the leading accounts-only approach fixes Social Security, but that's only on the assumption that higher growth brings in $6.9 trillion in additional revenues. Don't bet on it.

Each party faces a decision in coming months. The White House will have to decide whether to set aside money in the president's budget proposal to fund carve-out accounts. That is what it has done in previous budgets. If it continues the practice, the Democrats will have an excuse to walk away from the table: They will say that Bush is still insisting on something they consider a deal-breaker. There's another problem, too: A lot of money would have to be set aside. It's conceivable that the Democrats could come up with a budget that showed a surplus while Bush, because of the accounts and higher defense spending, proposed a continued deficit. That's probably not where a lot of Republicans want to be.

The Democrats, meanwhile, must decide whether to oppose Bush's nomination of Andrew Biggs as Social Security's deputy commissioner. Because he has supported personal accounts and has written on the subject for the libertarian Cato Institute, some Democrats—and the editors of the *New York Times*—are depicting him as a fanatic. But Biggs has earned the respect of Democratic experts on Social Security: notably Jason Furman, an adviser to John Kerry's presidential campaign. Biggs is a straight shooter, his work in recent years has concerned technical issues related to the program, and he is at least as concerned to counter misinformation on the right as on the left. (He has not hesitated to point out to me when he thinks I have been off base in covering Social Security.) If Democrats shoot down Biggs's nomination, it will be an early signal that they have no interest in talking to the administration about Social Security and want to keep using the issue for partisan purposes. If they let him through, however, it would signal openness to at least a temporary truce.

The outlines of a possible deal aren't hard to figure out. Democrats would have to accept that there is no way to pay for benefits to grow as fast as the government has been promising. They would have to let benefits grow more slowly, especially for high earners. Republicans would have to accept add-on rather than carve-out accounts. They might have to accept higher taxes, too, although there is a limit to how far they could go.

Could the president and a Democratic Congress agree on these changes? It probably won't happen. But it could. **NR**

■ **POLITICS**

A Lib-Lib Romance

Don't count liberals and libertarians as hitched just yet

JONAH GOLDBERG

"LIBERTARIAN" has become something of a feel-good word lately. Markos Moulitsas, the guru behind the Daily Kos, penned an essay not too long ago making the case for the "libertarian Democrat." His analysis is thin gruel, but what's interesting is that arguably the most partisan left-wing Democrat in America is eager to claim the libertarian label for his side. At the same time, mainstream liberals have been proclaiming that they always loved and respected those supposedly libertarian conservatives of yesteryear, like Reagan and Goldwater.

Meanwhile, on the right, many conservatives eager to distinguish themselves from the messiness of the Bush administration and the unrepentant jobbery of the congressional GOP now use the word "libertarian" like an alibi: "Hey man, I didn't do it. I'm a libertarian."

Perhaps sensing an opportunity here, professional libertarians are flexing their muscle. The Cato Institute put out a paper holding that some 15 percent of voters are libertarian and that, more important, they are the much-coveted "swing voters" who decide elections. And in a number of very close elections in November, many libertarians seemed almost giddy that they might have been responsible for the defeat of Republicans.

In its most basic form, the libertarian complaint should be familiar by now: From Terri Schiavo to diarrheic spending, the GOP has betrayed its commitment to limited government. So, the libertarians reason, why not "experiment" with the Democrats a bit? They expand government too, but at least they're more liberty-loving when it comes to drugs, sex, abortion, etc.

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For people like me, who want the ease of making emergency and personal calls with the touch of a button. Over the years, cell phones have become smaller and smaller with so many complicated features. The problem is many of us just want the ability to call 911 in case of an emergency and check in from time to time with friends and family. I've heard my friends complain about the cell phones their well-meaning kids bought or gave them. They even program in some numbers to try to help. But my friends never use those phones – or even turn them on for that matter! They're just too confusing to use and difficult to hear and see.

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The problem here is that "libertarian" is a shmoo-like word but libertarians are not shmoo-like people (shmoos being the magical creatures from *Lil' Abner* who could take any form and be anything). *Everyone* likes to think he's in favor of maximizing freedom. But in reality most folks want to maximize only the freedoms they like. I often ask self-described libertarians if they support government censorship of hardcore pornography on Saturday-morning broadcast television. If they say yes, then they aren't really pure libertarians. If they say no, I congratulate them on their consistency and tell them why their political ambitions are doomed.

"Libertarian-leaning" people are often quite severe about which "freedoms" they want liberalized and which they don't. Indeed, they're often single-issue voters. Just ask the folks at Libertarians for Life. Meanwhile, some doctrinaire libertarians are fixated on legalizing drugs, others on gay marriage, and some, amazingly enough, on defending the moral legitimacy of the Confederacy. A bloc of centrist swing voters this ain't. The point is that most of the talk about "libertarians" switching sides has been exactly that, talk.

Until now. Brink Lindsey, a vice president at the Cato Institute and one of the sharpest libertarian wonks in Washington, upped the ante from flirtatious jibber-jabber to genuine philosophical wooing. In a recent issue of *The New Republic*, Lindsey restates the familiar libertarian gripes, but goes on to argue that the fusionist project launched by Frank Meyer in these pages five decades ago has essentially run its course. "Fusionism" was the label (coined by L. Brent Bozell) to describe Meyer's view that the ends of traditional morality could be reached only by libertarian means: Virtue not freely chosen cannot be virtuous, he argued.

Lindsey goes further still. He argues that, empirically speaking, fusionism was a mistake for libertarians from the get-go. An "honest survey of the past half-century shows a much better match between libertarian means and progressive ends." He proposes "a refashioned liberalism that incorporate[s] key libertarian concerns and insights" and "make[s] possible a truly progressive politics once again." This politics, as he envisions it, is "not progressive in the sense of hewing to a particular set of preexisting left-wing commitments, but . . . joins together under one banner the causes of both cultural and economic progress."

What makes Lindsey's overture significant is that he comes from the branch of libertarianism that actually matters: economics. Economic libertarians, under the leadership of Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman, have been so successful in the conservative movement—and the conservative movement has been so successful because of them—that "economic conservative" and "libertarian" have long been synonyms. But here's Lindsey, an economic libertarian par excellence, trying to convince *liberals* that free markets are "progressive." He wants liberals to accept the fact that libertarian means achieve liberal cultural ends. Rich societies become more tolerant of sexual freedom and civil rights, and invest more in education and the environment—and societies become rich by following the advice of the Friedmans and Hayeks. Lindsey proposes finding common ground with liberals on issues from agriculture subsidies (which are bad for the environment) to tax reform. His policy proposals would warm the cockles of any NR editor's heart, and we should wish him luck.

Nonetheless, the tension between conservatives and libertarians is not as one-sided as he and others would have us believe. Libertarianism was once primarily concerned with negative liberty—i.e. delineating a zone free of government intrusion. Meyer's libertarianism was primarily concerned with the ability of the individual to find the virtuous path within "an objective moral order based on ontological foundations" best expressed in Western civilization. As such, fusionism was less a coalitional doctrine than a metaphysical imperative. But these days, phrases like "objective moral order" will get you knocked off Cato's Kwanzaa-card list. Liberty's virtue is no longer that it supports the virtuous. Rather, according to today's leading libertarians, economic freedom's virtue lies in its ability to provide everybody the custom-made lifestyle of his choice.

Virginia Postrel, the former editor of *Reason*, wrote an engaging ode to consumerism in *The Substance of Style*. In *The Future and Its Enemies*, she made a compelling case for change and cultural evolution without heed to tradition. Her successor at *Reason*, Nick Gillespie, has moved the magazine even more sharply toward cultural libertarianism. There's still reverence for the free market, but mostly for its creative destruction of tradition. My close friend (and *Reason*'s science correspondent) Ronald Bailey has thrown his eggs into the basket of biotechnology, celebrating its potential for individualized eugenic betterment as "liberation biology." Cato's Will Wilkinson seeks to graft liberal philosopher John Rawls onto Hayek to form something called "Rawlsekianism." And Lindsey's next book certainly doesn't sound like it shares Meyer's preoccupation with philosophical imperatives. It's called *The Age of Abundance: How Prosperity Transformed America's Politics and Culture.*

This emphasis on the liberating power of technology and wealth—i.e., materialism and positive liberty—represents an enormous philosophical transformation within libertarianism that echoes, albeit faintly, elements of the economic liberalism of John Dewey and FDR. It also shows that today's libertarians have a different view of the 1960s than their forefathers, such as Meyer. Evaluating the ideas within this burgeoning enterprise would require another essay, and a very long one. But three preliminary points are worth mentioning. First, a new left-leaning fusionism is a long way off. The flaws in Lindsey's dream are Aesopian: The scorpion *had* to sting the frog because that is what scorpions *do*; liberals *have* to engage in economic social engineering because that is what they *do*. Second, sure, lib-lib tactical alliances are possible, but conservatives would be idiotic to whine excessively about them. After all, the true sign of your movement's success is when your opponents start copying you.

Lastly, if the conservative-libertarian union is in trouble, it's not solely because conservatives have strayed from their vows. Marriages tend to dissolve when both parties "grow apart," and libertarians have been doing quite a bit of growing themselves. "You've changed" is a fair accusation from both sides, though "I don't even know you anymore" is surely an exaggeration. Perhaps the real lesson here is that conservatives and libertarians need to recommit themselves to the fusionist project. In other words: Let's seek counseling. **NR**

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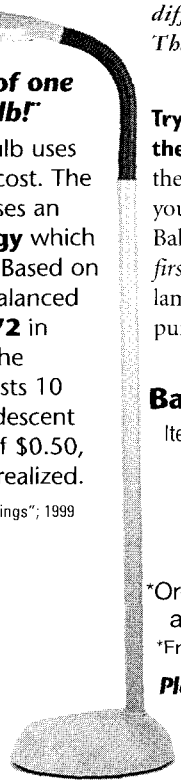

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■ POLITICS II

X Marks The Spot

Why old-fashioned voting may be better than modern

BYRON YORK

Do you remember the Election Crisis of 2006? In the weeks before November 7, Democrats laid the groundwork for widespread legal challenges to voting results, readying themselves to find irregularities, voter suppression, and outright fraud in precincts across America. Activists on the left established hotlines—call 866-OUR-VOTE!—and assembled platoons of volunteer lawyers. This time, they vowed, Republicans would not get away with stealing an election.

And then Democrats won. The hotlines went quiet. The lawyers went back to work. The crisis went away.

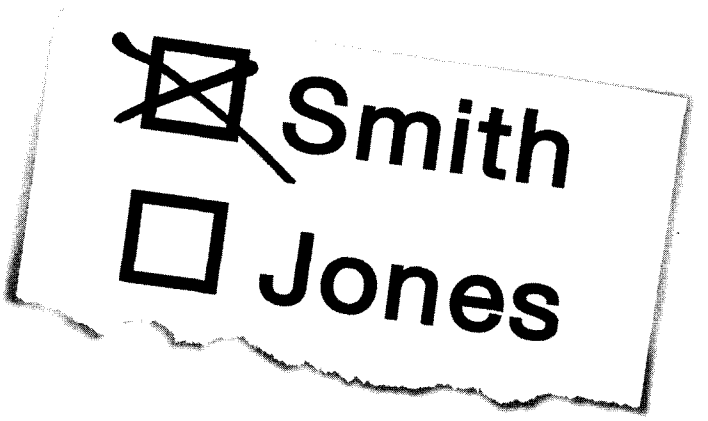
Which left some Capitol Hill Republicans who have worked with Democrats on so-called "election reform" issues feeling a little, well, cynical. "If they lose, they assume something is wrong with the system," says one top Senate aide. "We lose, we say we lost. We're not going to court. Had the shoe been on the other foot, they would have been suing until the end of time."

As it turns out, however, there is one case in which Democrats are suing, at least for now. And even though it appears they are flat wrong about the facts of the case, their objections raise serious questions that need to be resolved before 2008.

The case involves the House race in Florida's 13th Congressional District. Republican Vern Buchanan and Democrat Christine Jennings ran neck-and-neck throughout the campaign, and when it was all over on Election Night, Buchanan led Jennings by 364 votes out of about 238,000 votes cast.

Complicating the matter was the fact that there were about 18,000 undervotes in the race—that is, ballots in which voters cast their vote in other contests but did not vote in the Buchanan–Jennings race. Now, there is no requirement that a person vote in every race; voters can skip any race they choose. And undervotes are nothing new in the 13th District: In a previous House race, there had been 12,000 undervotes. Still, 18,000 was an unusually high number. And they were concentrated in one place—Sarasota County—although the district includes parts of five counties.

Some Democrats immediately jumped to the conclusion that the county's paperless, touchscreen iVotronic voting machines, made by a company called Election Systems & Software, Inc., had malfunctioned—or, perhaps, been tampered with. If the machines had worked, Democrats claimed, Jennings would have been the clear winner. Sarasota County officials denied there was a problem, or at least a problem with the machines. "It's not a mechanical issue," said elections supervisor Kathy Dent. "We did not have any equipment failure."



A machine recount began on Monday, November 13. As it started, Jennings filed suit, asking that the voting machines be locked up for future inspection. The recount added a few votes to Buchanan's column, and at the end he led Jennings by 401 votes. Then there was a second, manual, recount, which ended with Buchanan up by 369. That was the final, official, result; on Monday, November 20, state officials certified Buchanan the winner.

But Jennings still refused to concede. On certification day, she filed a new lawsuit demanding another election, alleging that the recount total was wrong because thousands of votes were "not counted due to the pervasive malfunctioning of electronic voting machines." A short time later, Jennings traveled to Washington for a House freshman orientation session—she even tagged along with a Buchanan staffer who was checking out office space—and acted to all the world as if she were the winner.

In late November, Florida election officials began yet another test, this time running a mock election on a few voting machines to see if that would produce results similar to the actual election. It did, with no serious malfunctions, pervasive or otherwise. Jennings reacted by adding Election Systems & Software, Inc., to her lawsuit. Finally, she vowed to ask the House of Representatives, when Democrats take control, to throw out the results of the election. In early December, she got the support of Democratic National Committee chairman Howard Dean, who called for a re-vote.

The only problem was, there was no evidence anything had gone wrong with the machines. As the wrangling went on, a group of three political scientists—James Honaker and Jeffrey Lewis of UCLA and Michael Herron of Dartmouth—began to look into the matter. They found no evidence of machine malfunction, either, and instead argued that the problem was most likely a confusing ballot design in Sarasota County's machines. The ballot for the 13th District was on the same screen as that for the Florida governor's race. The governor's ballot was bigger, had more candidates, and took up most of the screen, the researchers found, and that most likely distracted voters' eyes from the Buchanan–Jennings race.

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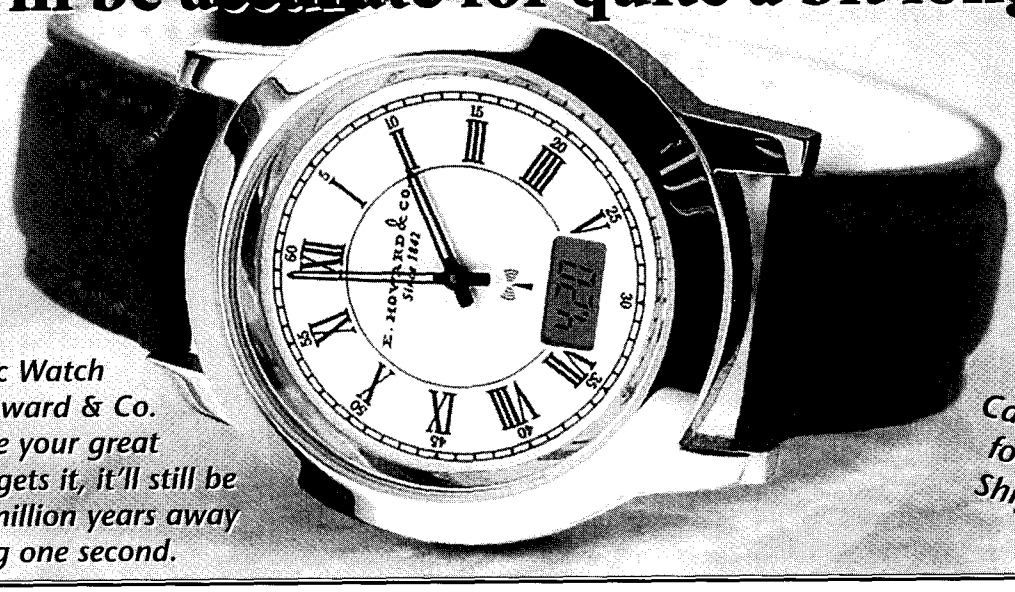

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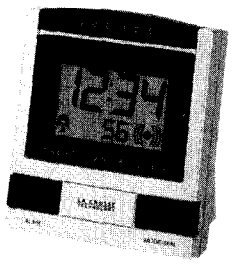

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That theory was supported by the fact that in other counties, the 13th District race was given its own screen—and there was not an unusually high number of undervotes. Also, in those other counties, when two other races were packed onto the same screen, there was an increased number of undervotes. "We conclude with what we believe is a simple and conservative implication of our main finding," the authors wrote: "iVotronic touchscreen voting systems should not combine important races on the same voting page."

It was as simple as that. There was no malfunction and no sabotage.

That conclusion is gaining increasing support among nearly all experts outside the Democratic party. But there is still no proof of the results that you can hold in your hands. And because of that, the controversy has put candidates, activists, election officials, and lawmakers nationwide into a quandary: After the Help America Vote Act of 2002, the government spent millions of dollars to help states install new, paperless, electronic voting machines, and those new systems have earned perhaps even less public confidence than the old paper-ballot systems. Even though Jennings's claims were unfounded (and they were positively scientific compared with the paranoid ravings in some quarters of the Left about Diebold machines), people in both parties are still uncomfortable about votes cast with no paper record.

It's a development filled with irony, since the electronic machines were rushed into use as a "reform" in the wake of the 2000 Florida recount. (And just to show that the political gods have a sense of humor, the Florida 13th race was to replace the outgoing Rep. Katherine Harris, the Left's favorite villain from Bush/Gore days.) But it has led to a movement to take a step backward in technology, to abandon the electronic machines and go back to the old, paper ballot.

"On one side, we have vocal opponents of paperless electronic voting who are very well organized and make some excellent points backed by some pretty good studies," says Dan Seligson, editor of the nonpartisan ElectionLine.org. "On the other side, we have election officials, who still believe very strongly that paperless voting is secure, reliable, and convenient. And in the middle are the lawmakers."

Increasingly, it appears, the lawmakers are moving toward paper ballots. In 2007, the House will take up a bill by Democratic representative Rush Holt that would require voting machines to make a paper record. That could mean attaching a receipt printer to electronic machines, or it could mean a switch back to optical-scan paper ballots. Observers in both parties believe the Holt bill will likely pass the Democrat-controlled House, and probably emerge successfully in some form from the Democrat-controlled Senate. The question then will be whether Congress will give states money to replace the still-new electronic machines, just six years after handing out cash to buy them.

Whatever Congress decides, local election officials are already moving on their own to get rid of the electronic machines. Maryland, New Mexico, New Jersey, Connecticut, and several other states are in the process of changing their systems. Florida is looking at changes, too—and Sarasota County has already announced that it is switching to optical-scan/paper ballots for 2008. "What happened there will probably have an impact in legislatures far beyond Florida," says Seligson.

Of course, even if changes are made, voting systems will still have problems. Electronic machines are certainly easy to use, and they eliminate questions of voter intent: You either selected this name or that one. They're also highly accessible to the disabled. But problems can arise when printers are attached to the machines; like any other printers, they can jam or run out of ink. And with optical-scan ballots, a voter might pencil in a space too lightly, or do so outside the required area, which means election officials will be back to studying ballots to determine intent.

Still, for all the problems, experts are coming around to the idea that voting is one of those things—like the wooden baseball bat or the handwritten Post-it note—where the low-tech solution is the best. Yes, Democrats will still protest when they lose elections. But everyone will have more confidence when real, paper ballots determine the winner. Just ask Congressman Buchanan. **NR**

■ **APPRECIATION**

She Was Right

Jeane Kirkpatrick, statesman and intellectual

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

THE most important story about Jeane Kirkpatrick was told by Jay Nordlinger in his NRO tribute to her: "Facing a group of visiting American dignitaries, [Andrei Sakharov] said, 'Kirkpatski, Kirkpatski, which of you is Kirkpatski?' Others gestured to Jeane. He said, 'Your name is known in every cell in the Gulag.' The reason was, she had named the names of Soviet political prisoners, on the floor of the U.N."

A similar story is told about President Reagan by the anti-Soviet dissident Vladimir Bukovsky, who discovered in some Soviet archives a document he had painstakingly typed out himself years before. It was a list of Gulag prisoners he had handed to Reagan with the request that the president ask for their release at a superpower summit. Reagan had in turn handed it to Gorbachev.

Every now and then these leaders received some evidence that their pressure had not been ignored—the release of a Sharansky. But even when their pleas were rejected by the Kremlin, they gave hope to its victims. They had not been forgotten; for a few days at least their guards would be more wary, less brutal; the world knew their names and their plight. They were in purgatory, not hell.

If Jeane Kirkpatrick had done nothing else in her life but read those names out at the U.N., she would deserve praise and celebration. It is no small thing to give hope to the hopeless. But that particular moment was also the crystallization of her many contributions as both a public intellectual and a statesman.

Kirkpatrick took up an important distinction in political science—that between authoritarian dictatorships and totalitarian ones—and applied it fruitfully (and contro-

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versially) to U.S. foreign policy in the period when the Sandinistas were seizing Nicaragua and the Ayatollah was replacing the Shah. Her argument was that totalitarian regimes were manifestly worse than authoritarian ones since the latter allowed their subjects significant civil and intellectual freedom outside the realm of actual government. Totalitarianism, however, ruled and intruded on every aspect of life. Such regimes were not only incompatible with a liberal world order in principle, they were allied to the major anti-Western powers in practice. U.S. foreign policy should not therefore support the overthrow of authoritarian rulers if the alternative seemed likely to be totalitarians hostile to America. That would only make matters worse for everyone. So U.S. human-rights policy should place a higher priority on helping the innocent prisoners in the Gulag and its Asian equivalents. That would advance both human rights and U.S. interests.

These arguments, expressed most powerfully in her *Commentary* essay "Dictatorships and Double Standards," won the admiration of Ronald Reagan. They met and realized that they were political soulmates—long-time Democrats unhappy with their old party, Cold Warriors, American patriots, and tough-minded believers in liberty. Appointed to Reagan's Cabinet as U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Kirkpatrick became an eloquent spokesman for American values in public forums and a close ally of Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and CIA chief William Casey in private on such matters as helping the Contras and resisting the commitment of U.S. forces in Lebanon. (She could never work out what the U.S. forces were supposed to accomplish.) She lost that battle, but she won most of them—both because Reagan was of like mind and because he liked her. After one especially bruising debate between Kirkpatrick and Secretary of State Al Haig, Reagan got up to leave, changed his mind, walked around the table, and kissed her to mark his regard.

But what pleased Reagan infuriated the Left. Kirkpatrick was accused of being sympathetic to authoritarian regimes and of possessing a streak of authoritarianism herself. Her support for human rights as a weapon against the Soviets was twisted to make it sound as if she were advocating neglect of prisoners and subjects under authoritarian governments. And a small academic and journalistic cottage industry was established to knock down her broad thesis that authoritarians, with all their manifest faults, were nonetheless generally to be preferred to totalitarians when there was no democratic alternative on offer. Three points were at issue: Were totalitarians really more oppressive? Were they less successful economically? And were they less capable of evolving peacefully into democracies?

Despite the Left's best efforts, there is really no doubt that Kirkpatrick was correct on the first two points—and the fortuitous death of Pinochet a few days after her own produced columns and debates that illustrated her victory in statistics. If the number of murders committed by a political system is a good test of its oppressiveness, then the totalitarians win hands down. Their total of victims runs to over 100 million. A comparison of two Latin American dictators, authoritarian Pinochet and totalitarian Castro, is even more revealing: Castro murdered three times as many people as Pinochet in executions, prison, informal murders, etc. But if we also include the boat people deliberately murdered on the high seas, Castro killed 20 times more innocents than Pinochet.

The test of economic progress produces the same lopsided result. Communism collapsed, among other reasons, because it failed economically. It could not feed its people, it lagged technologically, and its shops were full of substandard goods that few wanted and empty of goods for which there was a massive demand. Cuba and North Korea, which remain fully totalitarian, are economic ruins in which people literally starve. One terrible result is the spread in Cuba of prostitution among middle-class women whose earnings from their formal professions are too low to support their families. Spain and Chile by contrast emerged from their authoritarian experience (under Franco and Pinochet respectively) as successful modern economies. Both are among the leading economies in their regions. Again, it is game, set, and match to Kirkpatrick.

And shortly after her death, Jeane scored a posthumous triumph when a *Washington Post* editorial on Pinochet's death declared that she had won on the third point: Chile had evolved peacefully into a democracy whereas Cuba remains sunk in dictatorship. As far as it goes, that encomium is justified. But then Castro is still alive—just. How will things look in ten years' time? Kirkpatrick's critics had, after all, pointed to the peaceful transformation of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia in 1989 as disproving her claim that totalitarianism was a despotic dead end. And on that they seemed to have at least half a point.

Late last year, however, an Australian scholar, Aviezer Tucker, published some early results from his research into the differing fates of post-authoritarian and post-totalitarian societies in the Australian public-policy journal *Society*. These results—of which Jeane was happily aware—showed that she had been correct on her third contention. Post-authoritarian societies evolve into recognizably democratic societies with free speech, *meaningful* elections, a rule of law, the replacement of the old authoritarian elites by new ones, and—after an interval—justice for past crimes. But post-totalitarian societies are too wounded and misshapen, as a result of the attempt to create an entirely new social order, to return to a normal civilization and democracy. They continue to be ruled by the old nomenklaturas, in particular by their old secret-police networks, which seize the properties of the totalitarian state but, instead of managing them in a capitalist fashion, gradually consume the assets. In such a society, there is no real rule of law, no safe property rights, no genuine competition between political parties, no replacement of the old elites, and no justice for past crimes—or indeed for future crimes.

Putin's Russia is the clearest example of this post-totalitarian society. Its KGB state controls the mass media, seizes whatever property it wishes, and seemingly uses intimidation and murder as political tools. The former security services exercise unaccountable political power throughout the former Soviet bloc, as a recent *New York Times* investigative article on Bulgaria pointed out. Seventeen years after the velvet revolutions of 1989, governments in Poland and elsewhere are seeking to bring them under democratic control. Until they do, the post-totalitarian state cannot be said to have reached democracy. When they do, such a long apprenticeship will have made Kirkpatrick's point.

It would be nice if she were as celebrated in liberal academia as in the cells of the Gulag. But some prisons are more secure than others. **NR**

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■ CULTURE WATCH

Dominican Republican

Our man up north in Manhattan

JASON LEE STEORTS

I MUST confess to a sin, although among NATIONAL REVIEW readers it is probably more like a heresy: I have been, as recently as this year, a ward of the welfare state.

It wasn't my fault. I slipped onto the dole without even realizing it, and I am happy to report that the experience had a reforming effect. That is, it convinced me once and for all that "public assistance" is a generally rotten idea, encouraging people to do generally rotten things.

There is, in Manhattan, a neighborhood called Inwood, and until recently it was my misfortune to live there. Inwood is the northernmost tip of the island, a stone's throw from Albany and a quick stroll to the Arctic Circle. But in temperament it is southern, the majority of its population being composed of immigrants from the Dominican Republic (a relatively recent phenomenon; for much of the 20th century, it was predominately Irish).

Inwood is a reasonably safe place, but its residents have embraced the culture of the Latin ghetto, making it well nigh uninhabitable. I doubt there is any Manhattan neighborhood where you can find more trash on the street of a Monday morning, or where you must endure louder blastings of reggaeton "music" in those nigrescent hours before the cock crows, than in Inwood. I once had occasion to eat lunch with a woman who worked for an outfit devoted to the betterment of inner-city schools, or some similarly dubious cause. When I named my employer, everything was ice; but when I told her where I lived, she decided we could be friends. "Oh really?" she chortled in her joy. "How progressive of you." Inwood is *that* kind of neighborhood.

My roommates in Inwood were a young Dominican couple who subleased to me a room in their three-bedroom apartment (my rent was to include all utilities—a fact whose relevance will soon be clear). Liza had grown up in the United States. She spoke fluent English, was a high-school graduate, and hoped eventually to earn a college degree. Her husband, Salvador, was, as far as I knew, an illegal immigrant. He spoke scarcely a word of English and was chronically unemployed.

He was also not her husband, but rather her "husband," for Liza was guilty of immigration fraud. Several years before meeting Salvador, she had accepted payment to marry a Dominican man who wished to become a U.S. citizen, a goal to be made possible by the marriage. This

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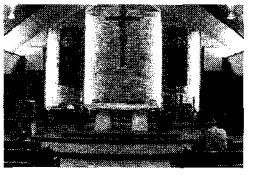

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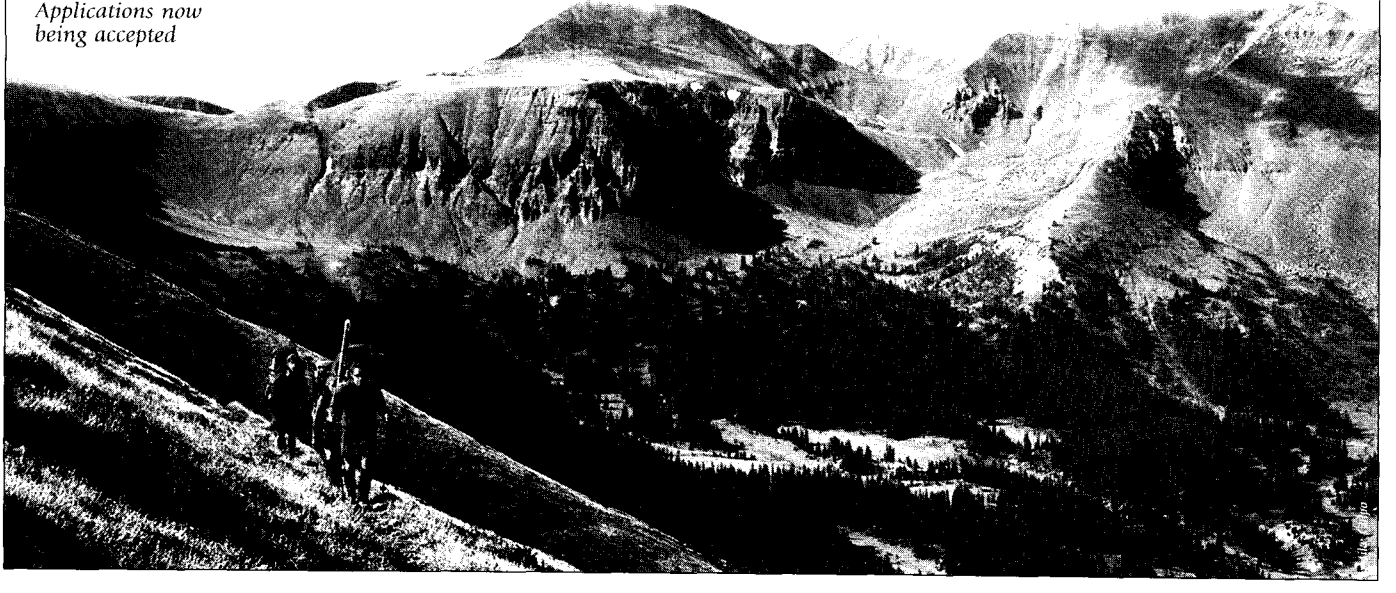

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man promised to pay for a divorce once he had attained his purpose, but subsequently refused. Liza was unwilling to pay for the divorce herself. When she met Salvador, she had not seen her husband in several years; but, as she was still married, she and Salvador had no choice but to live in sin. (Liza shared these details with me as a prelude to suggesting that I marry her cousin for $8,000. After reflecting on my market value and consulting a lawyer, I respectfully declined.)

Life with Liza and Salvador was fine at first. It soon became clear, however, that not all was well in their "marriage." Liza could not work because she was pregnant, and Salvador's failure to find a job led to frequent arguments about money. (These arguments were in Spanish, a language I understand very imperfectly, but Liza helpfully summarized them for me after the fact.) Their fights happened late at night, involved much shouting, and were often followed by other noisy conjugal activities.

Salvador eventually found an entry-level job as a bouncer at a local nightclub. He worked six nights a week and earned $100 a night, for a weekly take of $600, all of it unreported. Wealthy he was not, but his income—combined with the rent he received from me and from a second sublessee, a mysterious Greek who disappeared one day more or less without a trace—was enough to meet his family's needs. According to Liza, though, he brought home only $60 of his weekly $600. She suspected him of blowing the rest on booze and other women. His excuse was that he liked to get a shave and a haircut each week, and this is expensive. I leave the reader to ponder which explanation is the more plausible.

With Salvador on a quest for tonsorial perfection, Liza could not pay the bills. Enter the state. She applied to, and was accepted by, something she called "the HEAP." The first thing I learned about this HEAP was that it required me to buy whole milk. The HEAP paid for her milk, you see, but its vouchers were good only for skim. Since I liked skim and she liked whole, each of us would buy the other's milk, and we would swap.

Later that month, while browsing a newspaper, I learned more about the HEAP. Apparently it advertises. Why welfare programs advertise, I shall never know. I would prefer a "don't ask, don't tell" policy: Make it hard for people to ask, and tell them nothing when they do. But here, before my eyes, was an ad inviting all and sundry to avail themselves of the Home Energy Assistance Program. A visit to the HEAP's website revealed that it has nothing to do with dairy products (I suspect Liza had mistakenly referred to it instead of some other program of which she was a beneficiary). The HEAP does, however, subsidize the energy costs of qualifying persons. To qualify, a family of two must have a monthly income no greater than $2,307. Salvador and Liza made more than that, but, being ambitious types, did not let this mere rule stand between them and the HEAP.

My whole soul rebels against a coercion by which I subsidize the recklessness of those who are capable of taking responsibility for themselves and simply refuse.

Liza's son was born shortly after the negotiation of the Great Milk Pact. For a time there was domestic tranquility. But the fights recommenced, and Liza took to living at a friend's house for days on end; and then, one fine day, I came home to an apartment with no electricity.

The HEAP had "forgotten" to pay the power bill, Liza explained, but I was not to worry, for she would take care of it in the morning—and in the meantime here was a candle. I lit it and stumbled down the hall, comforting myself with the thought that at least Salvador was freshly shaved.

The next day I came home, once again, to a dark apartment. And the next day. Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow crept on, with Liza nowhere to be seen. On the first night of the blackout, she and Salvador had had the Armageddon of verbal fights, and she had moved in with her friend. As she owned no cellphone, had left no number, and almost never checked her e-mail, I had no means of prevailing on her to bring us back into the HEAP's good graces. Nor could I appeal to Salvador. He wouldn't have understood me, for one. For another, his professional duties were nocturnal, and our hours at home rarely overlapped. I passed the evenings alone, a lightless fool with my none-too-brief candle.

On Day Four I did happen to hear Salvador snoring in his bedroom, and resolved to communicate with him. (How do you express "¡Pay your %$@*ing electricity bill!" in charades?) I knocked on his door. He emerged, drunk, eyes bloodshot, hair disheveled, reeking like a beast of the field. Behind him, somewhere in the room, a candle dimly burned. He squinted, held out his hand for attention, and brought to bear the entirety of his English to utter the words: "This is where I sleep. If you do again, I hit you."

Day Five: black. Day Six: black. Days Seven, Eight, and Nine: black black black. Then, on the tenth day, a miracle. There was light. And we saw the light, that it was good.

Liza reappeared upon the scene. After a flourish of apology, she leveled with me: "I had money to turn the power back on, but then I would have lost the HEAP. So I had to wait for them to fix it."

The libertarian in me finds all redistributive schemes unjust. The Christian in me prefers kindness to justice, and would not care to live in a society that permitted extreme forms of deprivation. ("The private sector, the private sector!" retorts the libertarian.) But my whole soul rebels against a coercion by which I subsidize the recklessness of those who are capable of taking responsibility for themselves and simply refuse.

I have now moved to a neighborhood in the First World. When last I spoke to Liza, she was being sued by her landlord for unlawfully subletting her apartment. (In my naïveté I had assumed that our arrangement was legal.) She was also planning to leave Salvador and move to a different city. I imagined her future: her college dreams vanished, her son a bastard. Thus does the HEAP reproduce itself.

I cannot say that my feelings toward Salvador and Liza are magnanimous. But in my finer moments I am able to hope that, against all odds, they sorted things out. Perhaps someone introduced him to the innovation that is Dollar Cuts. And if not, perhaps they reconciled nonetheless, and will this very evening enjoy each other's company over a romantic candlelit dinner. **NR**

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Israel's "Right to Exist" (II)

How could anyone question such a right?

Perhaps the most bizarre aspect of the never-ending Moslem-Israel dispute is the perennial question about Israel's "right to exist." What a strange formulation! How weird that anybody should question anybody else's right to exist, that one country should question another's existence. It is definitely a first in the history of the world.

What are the facts?

Denial of the obvious. The questioning by the Moslems of Israel's right to exist is particularly strange in view of Israel apparently being the major preoccupation of all Arab countries and of most non-Arab Moslem nations, Iran prominently among them. And how can the Arabs possibly question Israel's existence since they have been involved with Israel in at least five major wars, in all of which they were decisively defeated. Nobody questions that if results had been reversed in any of these encounters, Israel would indeed have ceased to exist and most of its inhabitants killed.

How is it possible, one wonders, that despite the decisive military defeats that the Arabs have suffered, they still wish to deny Israel's existence. It is an almost unbelievable act of mental acrobatics to deny the existence of a country that has inflicted such severe and repeated punishment on them. When it becomes inevitable for the Arabs to mention Israel at all, they always refer to it as "the Zionist entity."

This non-acknowledgement of Israel's existence is not simply a matter of semantics. Arab maps do not show Israel, but a vast area, including Jordan, called "Palestine." Major cities such as Tel Aviv and Haifa simply don't exist on Arab maps. Arab school children, imbued from early age with hatred for the Jews, have no "official" knowledge of Israel's existence. They learn about it, one supposes, just as they learn about sex, by whispered remarks in the schoolyard.

Sacrifices for nothing. As an inducement to Israel for yielding part of its minuscule national territory, the Arab nations, dangle from time to time the carrot of "recognition," "the right to exist," before Israel. Almost inexplicably, the Jews, who are supposed to be so "smart," have yielded to these insincere offers and in the spirit of the "land for peace" mantra have surrendered valuable territory to their implacable enemies. They have turned the vast Sinai back to Egypt, including the oil fields that they had developed and which would have made them independent of petroleum imports for the foreseeable future. They have abandoned Gaza, where Jewish families had lived for generations. They have evacuated the buffer zone in southern Lebanon that protected Israel's northern cities and settlements. All of these sacrifices were in vain. The peace with Egypt is the coldest imaginable. The Gazans daily lob Qassam rockets into Israel and kill and wound its people. In southern Lebanon, where the Israelis have incredibly allowed vast fortifications to be established and tens of thousands of rockets to be installed, Hizbollah (the "Army of God") has launched a bloody war against Israel, which has caused thousands of casualties on both sides and mutual destruction, mostly in Lebanon.

> "...peace will come to this troubled region only when the Arabs accept the reality of Israel's existence..."

Take threats seriously. In order to gain "recognition" and, one hopes, the "right to exist," Israel now seems poised to yield Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and even the Golan Heights to its mortal enemies. Both would be unbelievable acts of folly and would immediately subject Israel to utter destruction. It would no longer be a matter of the right to exist, but an assured road to non-existence.

The denial of Israel's "right to exist" goes hand in hand with the threat to exterminate this non-existent entity as soon as feasible. It has already been tried many times. Abdal Nasser, the former dictator of Egypt, promised his people to drive the hated Jews into the Sea. He did not succeed. Iran's ruler Ahmadinejad has vowed to "excise the Zionist cancer" and to "wipe Israel off the map." He is feverishly trying to develop nuclear weapons. There can be no doubt that he will drop such weapons on Israel the very day he comes into their possession. The world made a terrible mistake when it doubted the fulminations of Adolf Hitler. The world would make a fatal error in not taking Ahmadinejad seriously. He means every word he says.

In view of that, and if persuasion continues to be unsuccessful, isn't it clear what the world must do in order to prevent a nuclear catastrophe that would engulf not only the Middle East but the entire world? But there are only two possible actors that could take such initiative: the United States and Israel.

The bizarre concept of Israel's not having the right to exist has been around for almost 60 years. It is often said that Israel needs to be "recognized" by the Arabs in order bring about peace and to "normalize" its position. But need not the Arabs, too, "normalize" their position? Most Arabs live in abject poverty and in third-world conditions. They need peace in order to obtain a standard of living approaching that of Israel. But peace will come to this troubled region only when the Arabs accept the reality of Israel's existence and negotiate with it openly and in good faith.

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GOP Duel

The primaries get underway, dominated by two men

JONATHAN MARTIN

THE race for the White House in 2008 was going to be different. For the first time since 1952, neither a sitting president nor a vice president would be on the ballot. With no candidate enjoying the advantages of incumbency, there would be no frontrunner.

That's how it was *supposed* to go.

But on the Republican side of the contest, the upcoming campaign increasingly appears to be dominated by just two men, Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney and Arizona senator John McCain. Though neither has officially declared his candidacy, the Mormon and the Maverick stand apart in their organizational strength heading into the "invisible primary" of 2007. No other candidate has come close to putting together the team of activists, operatives, consultants, and donors that Romney and McCain already have in place.

Romney and McCain are especially strong in the handful of small states that have early presidential primaries and therefore tend to decide presidential nominations. As early as this spring, both campaigns signed up key operatives to work in these states. Then Election Day came, and two things happened in short order to winnow the field. First, Virginia senator George Allen lost his reelection contest and was thus knocked out of contention for the presidency. A few weeks later, outgoing Senate majority leader Bill Frist took himself out of the running. Though neither, at least by the time he left the race, was thought as formidable as the two front-runners, each had worked the donor-and-activist base of the party almost since President Bush's reelection in 2004. With Allen and Frist gone, McCain and Romney were left as the only candidates who were both clearly running and in the top tier of GOP presidential hopefuls. And only they had begun putting together the apparatus needed to survive the primaries that have largely decided every GOP nomination for the past quarter century.

"I had little or no interest in Senator McCain, but got a call from Terry Nelson," recalls Dave Roederer, President Bush's Iowa chairman in 2004 and an experienced GOP operative. Nelson, an Iowa native and top Bush-Cheney '04 official who will run McCain's national campaign, told Roederer that if he didn't want to see McCain, he, Nelson, would be happy to convey that message to the senator. Roederer, friendly Midwesterner that he is, didn't want to offend McCain, and agreed to the meeting. He came away impressed.

While other candidates who came courting offered "platitudinous stuff on international affairs," McCain knew the field cold, Roederer says. What's more, "even when it wasn't popular, McCain said the president is right on Iraq." This position on the war is why Roederer, though a good party man, will serve in the same capacity for the maverick McCain as he did for Bush.

The Arizonan's team seems to recognize the strength of their chief opponent in the state this time around. "Romney's put a lot of effort into Iowa" and "has got a pretty good structure in place," acknowledges one of McCain's top national strategists. Success in the Hawkeye State for McCain, says this adviser, would be just to "come out of there with one of the tickets" into New Hampshire.

Romney's cultivation of Iowa Republicans has been intense. He visited the state twelve times before Election Day this year, and in June he rolled out a list of some 50 Republicans who form his "Iowa Advisory Committee." "We're working county by county and precinct by precinct, and that's the sign of how serious you are," boasts Doug Gross, Romney's state chairman and a Des Moines lawyer who was his party's gubernatorial standard-bearer in 2002. "It's a grassroots effort that wins the caucuses. You can't come in and do a tarmac effort and win."

To Gross, Romney's distance from the Iraq issue and lack of national-security experience is a plus. "He's a smart guy who can look at foreign-policy issues with a fresh perspective," Gross says, while McCain is hampered by his "years in Washington." Gross engages in the same kind of expectation-setting as the

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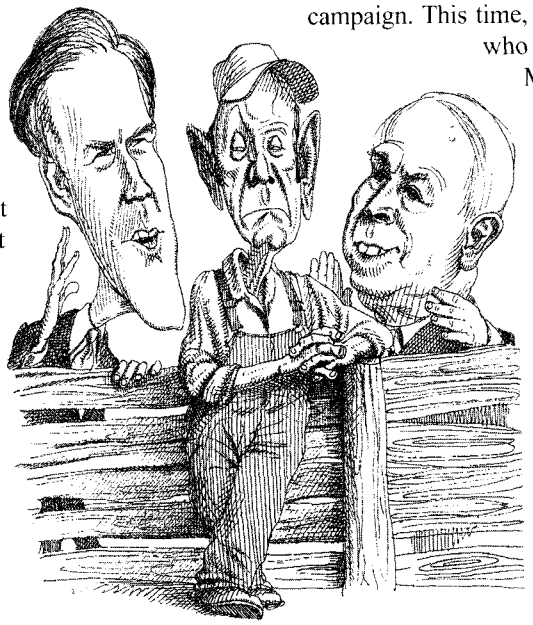
McCain strategist, saying that if Romney were to come out of the caucuses "ahead of the frontrunner" that would be "a huge deal." As for how many "tickets" will be available to go forth from Iowa, Gross says "historically it's three, but unless the dynamic changes it could be two."

The view that McCain and Romney have the superior Iowa organizations is not limited to their partisans. Steve Scheffler, president of the influential Iowa Christian Alliance, has not yet weighed in on the race and is hesitant to appear as favoring any of the candidates, all of whom are seeking his support. But he concedes that it's in the McCain and Romney camps "where most of the aggressive courting is happening." He adds, "The time is coming where candidates better have their act together." If it's not "shortly after the first of the year, they're going to have a hard time catching up." (Bad news for someone like Newt Gingrich, who says he won't make a presidential announcement until the fall of 2007.)

LITTLE STATE, BIG EFFORTS

Things are moving just as fast in the next crucial state, New Hampshire. Perhaps nowhere has the competition for early support been as hard-fought. Just before Election Day, both campaigns put out lists of endorsements by dozens of activists. According to Tom Rath, a New Hampshire lawyer and senior adviser to Romney in the Granite State, these lists weren't just empty press releases. All year, the two camps "worked very hard, competing against one another" for these supporters. "This is the real deal up here," Rath continues. "Both teams are acting like it's a real campaign, and that makes it harder [for anybody else] to jump-start" an effort.



Appealing to Iowa

Rath concedes that McCain, who defeated President Bush by 19 percent in the state's 2000 primary, is still "the president of New Hampshire," but says that circumstances will be different when '08 rolls around. McCain has to "remain a gadfly, maverick, outsider, but at the same time say to the establishment of the party that 'I will put this party back together and run it.'" There is, Rath argues, an "internal inconsistency in those two things." As for Romney, Rath says, "he's a little bit younger," and he "radiates energy and intellect."

Peter Spaulding, McCain's 2000 New Hampshire chairman and a state executive councilor, acknowledges that Romney "has done a good job of coalescing the anti-McCain activists in the state." But Spaulding argues that one of Romney's biggest assets there, his name recognition courtesy of the Boston media's penetration into southern New Hampshire, also has its drawbacks. "People are quite aware of the different positions he had in '94 and '02," Spaulding contends, referring to the more moderate social stances Romney took in unsuccessfully challenging Sen. Ted Kennedy, and subsequently in his winning gubernatorial bid.

A late entrant into the field would probably have only until this spring to get into the race, says Spaulding. Joel Maiola, chief of staff to New Hampshire senator Judd Gregg, says that "anybody who wants to jump in better jump in quickly." By February, Maiola says, any candidate hoping to play in New Hampshire ought to have an infrastructure in place. As for his boss, Maiola says the senator has met with everybody in the field and "you'll see him involved early next year once he makes up his mind."

MEANWHILE, DOWN SOUTH . . .

South Carolina has served as a firewall protecting establishment Republican candidates in the last four contested nomination battles. In 1988, 1992, 1996, and 2000, the Palmetto State was where insurgencies came to die. Richard Quinn, a longtime South Carolina GOP consultant, has seen them all, but is especially familiar with the most recent. Quinn served as McCain's top strategist in that now-famous 2000 primary where the Straight Talk Express was derailed by Governor Bush's juggernaut of a campaign. This time, though, Quinn says it will be his client who is the force to be reckoned with. "The McCain campaign almost has a position similar to the Bush campaign in 1999," he contends. For one thing, "there is something in the Republican mindset about a candidate who pays their dues, loses, and comes back." Reagan got his shot four years after challenging Ford in '76; Bush 41 ran surprisingly well in '80, waited patiently for eight years as VP, and then was rewarded with the nomination in '88; and Bob Dole was up in '96 after failed runs in '80 and '88.

Besides, McCain is just "the right leader for the times," says Quinn. And he points out that nearly 30 members of the legislature, multiple statewide officials, and a growing number of top Bush donors in the state agree. The McCain forces say that, much as in New Hampshire, their task is made easier in South Carolina by the still-intact base of support they start off with from their last bid (McCain won 42 percent in the 2000 primary).

As for Romney, Quinn allows that the governor is a "glamorous-looking guy from Central Casting," but says he'll need to "overcome" the centrist image he carved out in his two statewide runs in Massachusetts. And, Quinn notes, Romney "hasn't really had much to say about Iraq."

Terry Sullivan, another South Carolina Republican strategist, believes that McCain will be the frontrunner coming into the primary, but considers Romney a serious contender in the state. "It's a two-man game," says Sullivan, who is likely to join Romney's camp. The governor will have "a surprising and impressive team" in South Carolina, including many from the Bush 2000 campaign who feel that they got a "bum rap" for their role in that bare-knuckled primary. Sullivan says the Bush side wasn't the only one playing hardball then—or now. McCain's camp, he notes, is already attacking Romney by sending e-mails to activists highlighting moderate former stances of the governor that won't play well in conservative South Carolina. One of these e-mails,

ROMAN GENN

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obtained by NATIONAL REVIEW, draws attention to a recent *Boston Globe* story about Romney's views on gay rights when he ran for the Senate in '94.

Another sign of the brewing McCain–Romney battle in the state was the recent news that Warren Tompkins, Bush's top South Carolina consultant in 2000 and Quinn's bête noire, had signed on with Romney. With South Carolina's top kingmaker, the late former governor Carroll Campbell, gone, the state is increasingly run by its consultant class. That a top player such as Tompkins is going with Romney lends credence to the view that the governor is the only viable alternative to McCain.

THE NEW YORKER?

There is, of course, another potentially viable alternative. But whether Rudy Giuliani is actually in the field remains to be seen. Yes, "America's mayor" filed the requisite paperwork to form an exploratory committee last month. But Republicans in the early nominating states say Giuliani is nowhere near McCain and Romney in terms of organization, and many say they're not convinced he will mount a full-fledged campaign. Giuliani is reportedly just now starting to reach out to the grassroots. He of course retains a reservoir of goodwill with Republicans because of his 9/11 heroics, and starts off with 100 percent name recognition—but that doesn't mean he can skip wooing the party base.

Giuliani, perhaps more than any other candidate, should be spending time on what one McCain adviser calls the "non-sexy blocking and tackling" of the game. Who else has more to prove to the conservatives who dominate the GOP's nominating process than the pro-abortion-rights, pro-gay-rights, anti-gun Giuliani?

A year remains before the first vote is cast, and much can happen between now and then. But unless Giuliani starts to make some serious moves in the early-primary states—or something drastic and unforeseen happens—we can expect a fiercely fought mano-a-mano GOP presidential contest in 2007. **NR**

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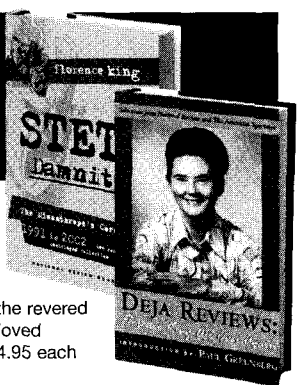

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■ THE ADMINISTRATION

Sixteen Months

John Bolton serves as U.S. ambassador to the U.N.

JAY NORDLINGER

In all honesty, it was amazing that John R. Bolton ever became U.S. ambassador to the U.N. in the first place. He was a committed conservative, a hawk, a skeptic of international organizations. (It might be better to call him a realist about them.) His personality was thought of as mercurial, even hot. Newspapers and magazines liked to refer to him as "Lightning Bolton." But President Bush wanted him at the U.N., and he wanted him so much that he even gave him a recess appointment, when the Senate refused to confirm him—that is, when Democrats blocked a vote on his nomination. Understandably, Bush wanted someone at the U.N. who actually supported his foreign policy. Such partners and aides seem few on the ground.

And it was not the first time that Bush had turned to someone "controversial." After he was sworn in, he nominated Otto Reich to be assistant secretary of state for the Western Hemisphere. The Democrats on the Foreign Relations Committee blocked that nomination, so Bush gave Reich a recess appointment. After a year, he did not resubmit the nomination, however, the obstacles in the Senate remaining. Bush also welcomed Elliott Abrams, but bypassed the Senate altogether. Abrams has served on the National Security Council staff since the beginning of the administration.

And when Bolton resigned as ambassador to the U.N., because the Senate was impossible, it was Bush who expressed the most sorrow, and a portion of bitterness. "You're looking at a man who is deeply disappointed," he told an interviewer, and he also blasted the "shallow politics of the Senate." He knew he had lost a good and valuable man, and that the country had, too. Bolton wound up at the U.N. for 16 months. And you would probably have to go back to the late Jeane Kirkpatrick, in Reagan's first term, for an ambassador so interesting, so effective, and so—there is no better word—exciting.

He was born in Baltimore in 1948, and went to Yale: both the college and the law school. In that first Reagan term, he served in the U.S. Agency for International Development. In the second one, he was an assistant attorney general. When the first Bush was elected, he went to the State Department, where he was assistant secretary for international organizations (the same job a very young Elliott Abrams had had in the first Reagan term). In 1990, NATIONAL REVIEW published a piece on Bolton called—believe it or not—"Jim Baker's Right-Hand Man." Secretary Baker was no favorite of conservatives, then as now. The piece asked, "How does a man who wears Adam Smith ties survive in a Bush administration?" Answer: Pretty well, even darn well. And we learned this charming bit of color: Bolton had in his office a dummy grenade, a gift from his former colleagues at

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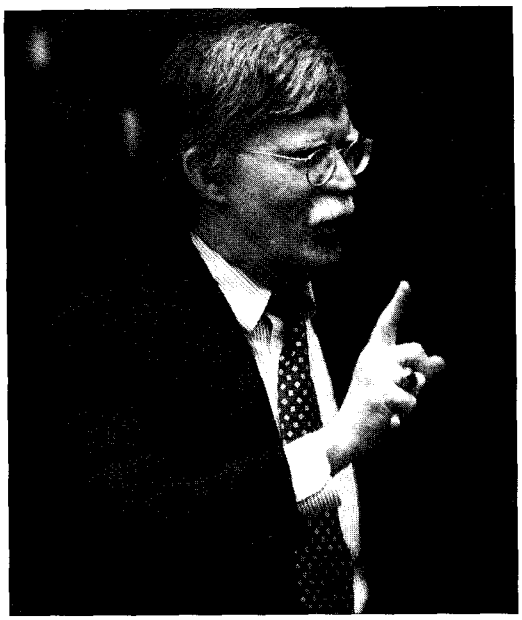
USAID. It bore the words, "John R. Bolton, Truest Reaganaut."

During the Clinton years, Bolton practiced law and worked at the American Enterprise Institute, the conservative think tank in Washington. And when George W. Bush was elected, Bolton went back to the State Department, this time as undersecretary for arms control and international security. His most notable achievement was to lead the diplomatic effort to establish the Proliferation Security Initiative, which has been useful in slowing the spread of nuclear weapons. (It got Qaddafi in Libya, for example.) Bolton is often faulted for being a diplomat lacking in diplomacy; repeatedly, his record contradicts that impression. What trips people up is Bolton's strict pursuit of American interests; they think of diplomacy as multilateralism for its own sake.

So, when President Bush nominated Bolton to be ambassador to the U.N., in March 2005, there was something like panic: mainly among Democrats and their allies in the media. They contended that Bolton was utterly unfit to work at the U.N. A reporter for the *Washington Post* said a lot when he said that Democrats had "assailed Bolton's knack for making enemies and disparaging the very organization he would serve." Many of us responded that that was exactly the problem: These Democrats thought that the purpose of the U.S. ambassador to the U.N. was to serve the United Nations; in fact, his job was to serve the United States, in the arena of the U.N. Sen. Barbara Boxer, the California Democrat, said of Bolton, "He's been contemptuous of the U.N." Many of us pointed out that there was much to be contemptuous about: Saddam Hussein's chairmanship of the nuclear-disarmament committee; Bashar Assad's chairmanship of the human-rights committee. The presence of the Cuban, Sudanese, and other monstrous regimes on that committee. And so on. Democrats clearly wanted the U.S. ambassador to be a U.N. advocate; they also clearly cherished the international body as a check on Bush foreign policy.



Excellent

The way they attacked Bolton, principally, was to attack his character. They said that, while at the State Department, he had manipulated intelligence findings. The Bolton camp neatly dispatched that charge. They further said that he was a stack-blower, temperamentally unsuited. This, too, was easily countered. Not that Bolton could ever be mistaken for a violet, of course. President Bush spoke up for his nominee this way: "John Bolton is a blunt guy; sometimes people say I'm a little too blunt. [He] can get the job done at the United Nations." And "if we expect the United Nations to be effective, it needs to clean up its problems."

FRESH AIR

Once at Turtle Bay, Bolton worked with his usual alacrity and skill. He tirelessly presented the American position, whatever it was, on any subject. A *Washington Post* article put it well after he resigned: Bolton had "recast the role of ambassador to the United Nations, a post traditionally filled by prominent Americans who helped explain the organization to Washington." This ambassador had been more interested in explaining Washington's views to the organization. His critics liked to paint him as a "rogue," a wild ideological animal—but he certainly never veered from the president. As he put it to a group of journalists last summer, "Some people may find it unfortunate, but I actually follow my instructions." And you were seldom unclear where Bolton, together with the president, stood. When Bolton left, the ambassador from India said of his counterpart's frankness, "It made it easier for us, because we knew exactly what his position was."

As education secretary in the second Reagan term, William Bennett fought what he liked to call "the education blob," or simply "the blob": the teachers' unions, the ed schools, the entire entrenched establishment. As U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Bolton fought the U.N. blob: the permanent bureaucracy at Turtle Bay, the permanent bureaucracy at the U.S. State Department, all of the U.N.'s many apologists and anti-reformers. A prime specimen of the U.N. man was Mark Malloch Brown, the deputy secretary general. Along with his boss, Kofi Annan, he undermined Bolton in every way possible. Last June, Malloch Brown made an extraordinary speech in which he blasted the U.S. government and, in the bargain, American conservatives. He said that Washington had not been faithful to the U.N. and that "much of the public discourse that reaches the U.S. heartland has been largely abandoned to [the U.N.'s] loudest detractors, such as Rush Limbaugh and Fox News." As a result, the utility of the U.N. was "in effect a secret in Middle America."

Bolton pounced all over this speech, saying that an official of the U.N. Secretariat had no business attacking a member state or its people. That is not the role of the institution's servants. When questioned about his reaction later, Bolton said, "Some people in the Secretariat have the idea that they can criticize the United States and get away with it. And the United States should not be a well-bred doormat. I'm going to respond every time they do this."

When Bolton resigned, or was forced to resign, owing chiefly to the implacability of Democratic opposition, the press naturally approached Malloch Brown. He chirped, "No comment, and you can say 'he said it with a smile.'"

And what were Bolton's chief accomplishments as ambassador? You might point to a flurry of resolutions, passed in the Security Council between July and October of this year: No. 1695, on North Korean nukes; No. 1696, on Iranian nukes; No. 1701, on the Hezbollah–Israel war; No. 1706, approving a U.N. force to Darfur; and No. 1718, again on North Korea. All of these resolutions were passed unanimously, except for the one concerning Iran, which Qatar opposed. Of course, you might ask what these resolutions mean if there is no follow-through—no consequence—as Bolton himself has long and eloquently asked. The

SPENCER PLATT/GETTY

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Security Council acts on Iran, and Tehran thumbs its nose—to which Annan, the Europeans, and the U.N. at large say, "All right." The Security Council acts on Darfur, and Khartoum says, "Nothing doing"—to which the U.N. blob says, "All right." Hezbollah and its allies in Syria and Iran are happily violating Resolution 1701, and hardly anyone cares. No wonder the world's tyrants disregard and snort at the U.N. Security Council. But if you are interested in resolutions and count them as a good, Bolton has succeeded.

TAKING THE RIGHT SHOTS

You might claim that Bolton's real successes have come in smaller, even more psychological, actions. Last February, the United States had the presidency of the Security Council, and Bolton made the absolute most of it. He had meetings start on time (a first). He also had the Secretariat brief members on important U.N. concerns. According to a recent Associated Press report, the punctuality has caught on, but the briefings have been dropped. Bolton held meetings on topics the U.N. would rather avoid: such as sexual exploitation by U.N. peacekeeping forces, and gross financial corruption at Turtle Bay. Bolton and the United States were not able to do much about U.N. corruption, but not for want of trying. They at least shone a spotlight. Neither were they able to get a decently reformed human-rights panel—the new Human Rights Council is as bad as the old Human Rights Commission. But, again, they spoke out strongly.

Bolton would say, "If member countries want the United Nations to be respected, they should begin by making sure it is worthy of respect." Presented with a watery human-rights proposal, he said, "We want a butterfly. We're not going to put lipstick on a caterpillar and declare it a success." The new panel is an unabashedly ugly caterpillar—dedicated, as always, to tarring Israel and the United States. And Bolton, incidentally, was magnificent on Israel, as an ambassador to the U.N. has an opportunity to be. When Hezbollah started its war against Israel, Bolton warned one and all not to "fall into the trap of moral equivalency." As to the tricky question of "proportionality," he expressed puzzlement: "Is Israel entitled only to kidnap two Hezbollah operatives and fire a couple of rockets aimlessly into Lebanon?"

Best about Bolton was the spirit he brought to his work, the clear relish he took in it. He was idealistic and hardheaded in equal measure. He talked to the press constantly, about anything they wanted to talk about. And he was almost always on the record. With the "gaggle," he was informative, entertaining, caustic, charming. His briefings were one of the best shows in town. He felt that public diplomacy was part of his job, so he made sure to be heard on al-Jazeera, the BBC, Japanese television—all over. Some other U.N. diplomats resented his dealings with the press. But they talked too, only off the record, or in leaks and such.

Some of his earlier critics, most prominently Sen. George Voinovich, the Ohio Republican, came to admire Bolton. When the ambassador had to resign, Voinovich said, "John Bolton has risen to the occasion and done a good job under the harshest of circumstances." President Bush remained a fan, and Bolton's biggest defender in the administration, by far. He said, "All Americans owe John Bolton their gratitude for a job well done." That is true. Bolton spent only 16 months at the U.N., but it was an excellent 16 months. **NR**

■ CONGRESS

Hyde in Winter

A grand old career in a Grand Old Party

JOHN J. MILLER

Unlike many of his GOP colleagues, Henry Hyde of Illinois is leaving Capitol Hill by choice: After 32 years in the House of Representatives, this remarkable man has finally decided to call it quits. In January, a Democrat from Texas will occupy his coveted first-floor office in the Rayburn Building. "He's already been in here to measure the drapes," says Hyde. "I'm serious. He actually measured the drapes."

At the age of 82, Hyde leaves behind an impressive legacy as one of the GOP's greatest debaters and legislative champions. "You can spend a lifetime in politics and encounter only a few people of Henry's caliber," said Vice President Cheney in September, at a tribute in Washington. "He's the rare member who can bring the House to silence merely by stepping to the well. When Henry Hyde begins to speak, you don't want to miss a word. You know you're going to hear something persuasive and moving, historically literate, intellectually honest." On December 5, the entire House honored Hyde by naming a room in the Capitol after him.

Born in Chicago in 1924, Hyde grew up in an Irish-Catholic family that went to Mass on Sundays and voted for New Deal Democrats on Election Day. After serving in the Navy during World War II, he finished his undergraduate degree at Georgetown and returned to Chicago for law school at Loyola. The Cold War was heating up, and Hyde began to move away from his political roots. "To me, Republicans were a bunch of bankers, bloated bondholders, and economic royalists," he says. "At Georgetown, however, I had become concerned about Communism—and I found the response of the Democrats to be woefully inadequate. They were too close to the far left. My God, Henry Wallace was actually the vice president!"

While Hyde attended law school, the typographers at the *Chicago Sun-Times* went on strike. "They needed proofreaders and I got hired," he says. "I was a scab. I wish I could attribute it to high principle, but it was for the paycheck."

One of his tasks at the paper was to proofread Eleanor Roosevelt's column. "I remember how she attacked Elizabeth Bentley," says Hyde, referring to the Communist-party defector who exposed Soviet espionage in the United States and became despised for it by many liberals. In a column released in August 1948, Mrs. Roosevelt condemned "the fantastic story of this evidently neurotic lady"—a line that Hyde can still repeat, almost verbatim. "This definitely pushed me toward the Republican party," he says.

Hyde voted for Eisenhower twice, but he waited until the late 1950s before registering with the GOP. "There weren't many of

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us in Chicago—it was 'we few, we happy few.'" He ran for Congress in 1962 and lost, though the margin of defeat was much smaller than he and other Republicans had expected. Four years later, he ran for the state legislature and won. He eventually rose to majority leader. He says that one of the proudest accomplishments of his entire career came in Springfield, when he passed a bill requiring government officials to place public money in interest-bearing accounts.

Around this time, Hyde first came into contact with the issue that would define his career more than any other: abortion. "A colleague asked me to co-sponsor a bill to liberalize the Illinois abortion law," he says. "I had never really thought about abortion, so I read the bill and read a book: *The Vanishing Right to Live*, by Charlie Rice. I became convinced that abortion was an evil." Hyde helped beat back the legislation he had been asked to support.

Even then, he had no idea what role the issue would play in his life. He won election to Congress in 1974, the year after the Supreme Court handed down its *Roe* v. *Wade* decision. "When I got to Washington, there was absolutely nothing happening on the abortion front," he says.

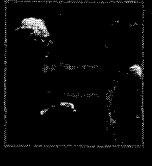
That soon changed. One day during his first term, Hyde was standing in the rear of the House chamber. "I was leaning against the rail and probably smoking a cigar, which was allowed back then." Rep. Robert Bauman, a prominent pro-life Republican from Maryland, told Hyde about a measure to pay for abortions through Medicaid. "He wanted to make an effort to take it out," says Hyde. "I told him to go ahead. But then he said *I* should do it because he was a known quantity and the other side wouldn't see it coming from me." On a piece of paper, they scribbled an amendment to prohibit the funding. Hyde took the lead in offering and debating it. The proposal united both pro-lifers and small-government conservatives. "To my surprise, it passed," says Hyde. "We proved something that day: There was a pro-life majority in the House and it just needed to be activated."

AN ENDURING AMENDMENT

This was the birth of the Hyde Amendment. There were legal and legislative challenges, but it has remained in place ever since—and it is without question the most consequential piece of pro-life legislation ever passed by Congress. "By fairly conservative estimate, in the 30 years that it has been in effect, the Hyde Amendment has saved over 1 million human lives," says Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee. The year before the Hyde Amendment, federal funds paid for some 300,000 abortions. Afterward, this figure dropped essentially to zero. The only major revision to the law came in 1993, when Congress added rape and incest exceptions to the life-of-the-mother clause that had been in place from the start.

The experience catapulted Hyde to the forefront of a national

got monks?



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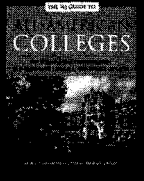

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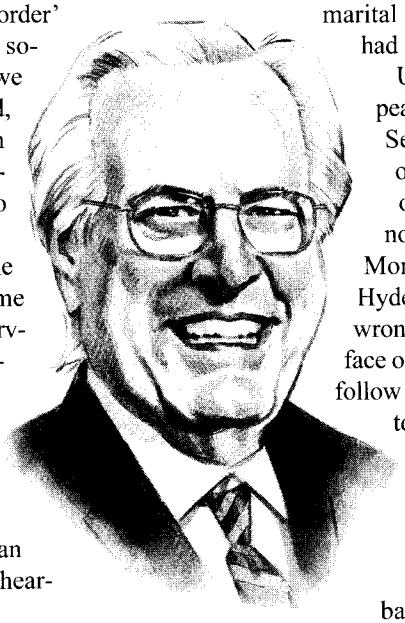
debate that stirs passions like no other. He became a leading spokesman for the pro-life cause and sought out forums to make his case. In 1984, New York governor Mario Cuomo gave an influential speech at Notre Dame explaining how Catholic politicians could embrace abortion rights and still remain true to their religious beliefs. Hyde would have none of it. He paid his own visit to South Bend and condemned "the rise of a militant secular-separationist perspective on the constitutional questions that seeks to rule religiously based values 'out of order' in the public arena." He also denounced the so-called right to choose: "The abortion liberty, we should insist, is a profoundly narrow-minded, illiberal position; it constricts, rather than expands, the scope of liberty properly understood." Elsewhere, he compared abortion to slavery and the Holocaust.

Abortion was Hyde's signature issue, but he wasn't a single-issue congressman: He became a hero to just about every faction of the conservative movement. Foreign-policy hawks appreciated his aggressive criticism of the nuclear-freeze movement and strong support for aid to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua. Libertarians valued his work to protect property rights against abusive asset-forfeiture laws. Reagan loyalists saw him as an indispensable friend during the Iran-Contra hearings.



Rep. Henry Hyde

Amazingly, liberals liked Hyde as well. They disagreed with him often, but many also admired his sincere commitment to principle, laughed at his jokes, and found him impeccably courteous during debates—to them, he was more Jekyll than Hyde. They eagerly recruited him to promote a few of their own causes. Hyde has voted for the anti-gun Brady Bill and, perhaps irritated by the occasional charge that he cares about babies only until they're born, the Family and Medical Leave Act. Yet his record is not that of a sail-trimmer: On its congressional scorecard, the American Conservative Union gives Hyde a lifetime rating of 85 percent.

By the late 1990s, Hyde was an elder statesman among the Gingrich Republicans, loyal to much of their agenda but also dissenting on key issues such as term limits (which he opposed). Then came the 1998 impeachment of President Clinton—an episode that continues to animate and haunt Hyde, almost a decade later.

LEWINSKYGATE

Shortly after the allegations against Clinton became public, Hyde advised caution: "You don't impeach him for a peccadillo," he told the *Chicago Tribune*. "I don't think that constitutes a high crime or a misdemeanor." But by the time he was tapped to head a congressional inquiry into Clinton's behavior, his views had hardened. He laments that, "even today, knowledgeable people believe impeachment was all about sex and more about Republican prurience, rather than rectitude about the rule of law."

Liberals launched a vicious attack on Hyde—a case study in the politics of personal destruction. "History will not be kind to you," warned Rep. Maxine Waters, the Los Angeles Democrat. The actor Alec Baldwin went rabid on Conan O'Brien's late-night TV show: "If we were in other countries, we would all right now, all of us together, all of us together would go down to Washington and we would stone Henry Hyde to death! We would stone him to death!" he shouted. "We would stone Henry Hyde to death and we would go to their homes and we'd kill their wives and their children! We would kill their families!" Hyde's family really did suffer a blow when Salon.com reported that Hyde had an extramarital affair in the 1960s—a secret the congressman had kept buried for three decades.

Ultimately, Hyde helped secure Clinton's impeachment in the House but failed to convince the Senate to remove the president from office. His only regret involves tactics. "I was too accepting of the senators' discipline, and their purpose was not ours," he says. "I should have demanded that Monica Lewinsky and Clinton testify." Although Hyde did not achieve his main objective, it would be wrong to view the entire project as a failure: In the face of a public backlash, he convinced Republicans to follow their consciences rather than the polls. "We had to do it," he says. His resolve helped deliver the outcome that many Americans favored: a meaningful punishment for Clinton—the humiliation of impeachment—but not his ouster.

Hyde was elected to Congress in 1974, a very bad year for congressional Republicans. Now he leaves during a similar moment of upheaval. "I'm a heartbroken Republican. We did it to ourselves this year: The instances of corruption and a war that seems to have no end did not create the impression of competence. We need to get away from the Democratic plan to purchase power by outbidding the opposite party. An awful lot of money is spent that shouldn't be spent. And we must initiate a national search for qualified leadership—people who are competent, incorruptible, and energetic."

So what does Hyde think about the 2008 presidential field? On John McCain: "He's interesting and unpredictable but I think he's electable and correct on social issues." On Rudy Giuliani: "I like him and he's electable, but he's dead wrong on the life issue and that invalidates his candidacy for me." Mitt Romney: "I don't know enough about him but he sounds promising." Then there's Hyde's House colleague, Duncan Hunter: "He's a good man but he's too protectionist." Asked about George Pataki, he simply snarls. And what about Barack Obama? He's not a Republican, but he's from Hyde's hometown: "I've never seen anyone with such a slim record receive such adulation. He seems like a nice and capable man, but he's being treated as Pericles revisited or something."

Until Hyde packed up his office, he displayed a bust of St. Thomas More—the patron saint of lawyers, and a man who died for his principles. Hyde has lived by his, and he wishes that he could advance them further by staying in office longer: "If Mother Nature and Father Time had not assaulted me, I'd run again—but they're standing in the way and they're formidable." So says the Grand Old Party's man for all seasons, in his winter. **NR**

DARREN GYGI

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■ TRADITION

Before You Say No . . .

A correspondence, nonfictional, between a young boy, a housewife, a headmaster, and the young boy's brother

ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH

March 7

Dear Mrs. Heath:

I wish to ask you a great favor. My brother David goes to Cranwell and he says they go easier on brothers, so I might have a chance to get in even though my grades aren't so terribly good. But I need three letters of recommendation and I have one from a priest and one from a nun and my father says he thinks the third one better be from someone who is not a priest or a nun. You are not a priest or a nun but yet you know me intamitely from me having delivered your paper even that bad day right after Christmas when their was no school and the *Times* boy didn't deliver his customers, and from those Catholic Christmas cards you always buy, and from the jack lantern pumpkins I helped you carve three years in a row, and the Easter Eggs, and a lot of other things. (Like the time I picked up John when he broke his arm and taught Priscilla how to ride a two-wheeler.)

Before you say no, I did break the trampoline but I didn't honestly know how heavy I was, because I grew very suddenly and the only reason I was always on the roof was because of my gliders which you said I could get if they were on the roof, and the time you wouldn't let me come in your backyard for three weeks that time, Catholic Word of Honor, John started it and it was not my fault because Scout's Honor, I only gave John the most compleatly gentle kind of tap so he would go home so Georgie Cunningham wouldn't beat him up, because you know how Georgie is when he gets mad. Because John threw a mud ball at him on his bicycle. Not that you were wrong, but that I'm explaning now, because you were so mad then you wouldn't give me a chance to explane, because John got their first and he fed you a lot of garbage. But I still like John, he is a fine young boy, he has been well brought up by his Mother.

But even if sometimes you don't get along with me too well, I always think of you as my "Oldest Friend" so I hope you will do me this great favor of writing me a letter of recommandation.

Thanking you for your trouble,

Respectfully yours,
PETER BAILEY-GATES

P.S.: Thank you for the pennies of which I already had the 1926 San Francisco mint but I did not have the 1921 Denver. Do you have a 1905 Indian Head, I will pay one nickel, clear profit of four (4)¢?

Respectfully yours,
PETER BAILEY-GATES

March 7

Dear Peter:

I would be glad to write you a letter of recommendation to Cranwell, and I am very flattered that you asked me. Of course, I will have to tell the Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing but the Truth, so I hope nobody will be careless enough to allow my letter to fall into the hands of the police. I can't tell you how much I would miss you if you had to spend the next ten years in a reformatory.

Respectably yours,
MRS. H.

P.S.: No, I haven't got a 1905 Indian Head, which saddens me very much, but what saddens me more is the fact that even after three years' acquaintanceship you don't know me well enough to realize that I also know that this particular penny is worth $6! You and your 4¢ profit—hah! I've told you and *told* you about my high IQ. Don't you believe me? However, just to show you I bear no grudge, I will give you my duplicate of the 1911 no mint mark—for free yet!

Respectably yours,
MRS. H.

P.P.S.: Don't worry about my letter. I will bet you one dollar (from me) to one doughnut (from you) that you will get into Cranwell—not because you're such a hot-shot, you understand, but because if I'm crazy enough to like you, your priest and your nun are probably suffering from the same form of insanity. On the other hand, they may know you even better than I do, God help them!

Respectably yours,
MRS. H.

March 9

To Whom It May Concern:

Peter Bailey-Gates has been in and out of my house almost daily for the past three years—by "almost" I mean those short sentences of exile which I have been unkind enough to impose upon Peter—and in that time I have come to know him very well indeed: as friend, paper boy, fellow penny-collector, and combined decorator, waiter, and entertainer at my younger children's birthday parties.

I have found Peter to be unfailingly good-humored, well-mannered, and considerate—all of which qualities stand him in good stead in his relations with the public, which are many and varied. I am sure that no boy in New England, much less in West Hartford, has been engaged in so many intricate business enterprises as Peter Bailey-Gates. I have bought, hired, subscribed to, invested in, paid and been paid interest on fully a dozen of his ventures in the last three years—not even counting his snow-shoveling, leaf-raking, apple-picking, and garbage-can-toting, for which my own young sons are recruited.

A piece by Aloïse Buckley Heath (1918–1967) is an NR Christmas tradition.

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Peter's financial sense is, however, no deterrent to his feeling for what is fitting and proper: When he washed the car of the 70-year-old spinster who lives nearby, for instance, he was careful to explain (lest I should find out, I suppose!) that he had refused payment only because she had "no man to make money for her"; again, when he asked me to take an ad in his projected *Colony Road News* and I was so irreverent as to reserve two inches of space for the slogan "HOORAY FOR MRS. HEATH," Peter offered to refund my dollar because he had caused my ad to appear as "COMPLIMENTS OF A FRIEND." I must, however, state categorically that Peter has faithfully and conscientiously fulfilled his share of every and any contract between us, whatever it may have been. (And the fact that one or two of these contracts have been rather clearer to Peter than to me has been indignantly attributed by my own children to my habit of doing jigsaw puzzles, reading, watching television programs, and saying "Uh-huh" simultaneously, when I should have been *listening.* My husband affirms this judgment.)

Lest my young friend sound barely lower than the angels, I must add that his fertile imagination combined with his 13-year-old's sense of humor has led, on occasion, to my addressing him with words harsh and unkind ("You know perfectly well that when I told you last Tuesday you could climb up on the roof to get your glider, I didn't mean you could buy ten *more* gliders and *aim* them at the—and by the way, I hope you didn't buy them with the lottery money for the bicycle horn—when are you going to *have* that lottery, anyway? I bought those tickets six weeks ago!" And much more). These irrational, if predictable, crises of the adult world leave Peter possibly repentant, probably remorseful, but certainly unruffled. He is more sophisticated today than three years ago, when, at the age of ten, he frequently urged me not to get my liver in a quiver. Today, when Peter and I have what he refers to as "a difference of opinion," he retires with complete equanimity to his own backyard until such time as my ill-humor subsides. My change of mood is apparently picked up by Peter's extrasensory perception within the hour, for whenever I decide that the time has come for forgiving and forgetting, he appears at my front door within 15 minutes, to assure me *he* has forgiven and forgotten. By way of proof (or penance?) he then resumes without rancor his status as our daily visitor.

Needless to say, our friendship is steadfast.

ALOÏSE BUCKLEY HEATH
(Mrs. Benjamin Wild Heath)

THOMAS NAST/CORBIS

March 15

CRANWELL PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Office of the Principal

Mrs. Benjamin Wild Heath
29 Colony Road
West Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Mrs. Heath:

I am very grateful to you for your detailed and colorful description of Peter Bailey-Gates.

Many of Peter's accomplishments can be put to good use at school. Leaf-raking and snow-shoveling are part of the punitive curriculum. Endowed with all the energy which you describe, I am sure that Peter will be an early candidate for demerits.

We will try to keep pace with Peter. What substitute we will have when the occasion arises for Peter to "retire to his own backyard" we will try to figure out during the year.

Sincerely yours,
CHARLES E. BURKE, SJ
(Rev.) Charles E. Burke, SJ
Principal

March 15

Dear Mimi and Dad:

Please excuse the paper, for I'm in study hall, and since something happened tonight, which made me feel pretty proud of my little (little? Ha Ha) brother Peter, I thought I'd tell you about it, unless you already know. This has also changed practically my entire attitude toward Father Burke who has practically never been known to crack a smile in the memory of the oldest graduate.

Not more than five minutes ago, during the break between study-hall hours, Father Burke called me and showed me a letter which Mrs. Heath had written to him about Peter. It described Peter to a tee. All of the letter was praiseworthy about him, and had been written just about Peter and nothing else. Father Burke was astonished and asked me if it was all true, and I told him it was, and he said in that case PETER GETS IN!! . . .

Say hello to the little kids for me please, and tell them "Big Dave" will be home soon.

Love and prayers,
YOUR SON DAVID

March 15

Dear Pete—Boy, does Mrs. Heath sure have your number. Father Burke said he can hardly wait to get you up here to knock it out of you. Love and Kisses.

DAVE

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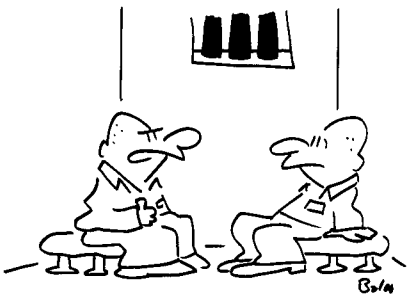
HELP!!!!

Viewing CBS

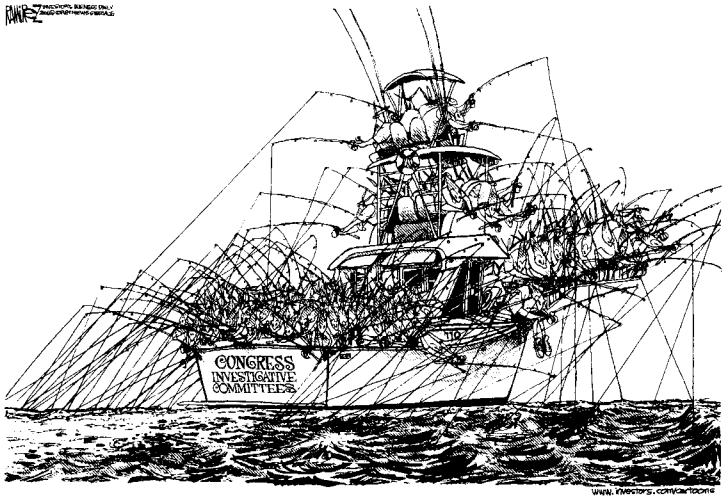
Katie Couric's ratings, now
Lower than a nursing sow,
Prompted Katie to invite
Baker's group, a few, to light
Something, anything—a FUSE—
That would make tomorrow's news.
Though they tried (Panetta humped),
Nothing worked. The ratings slumped.

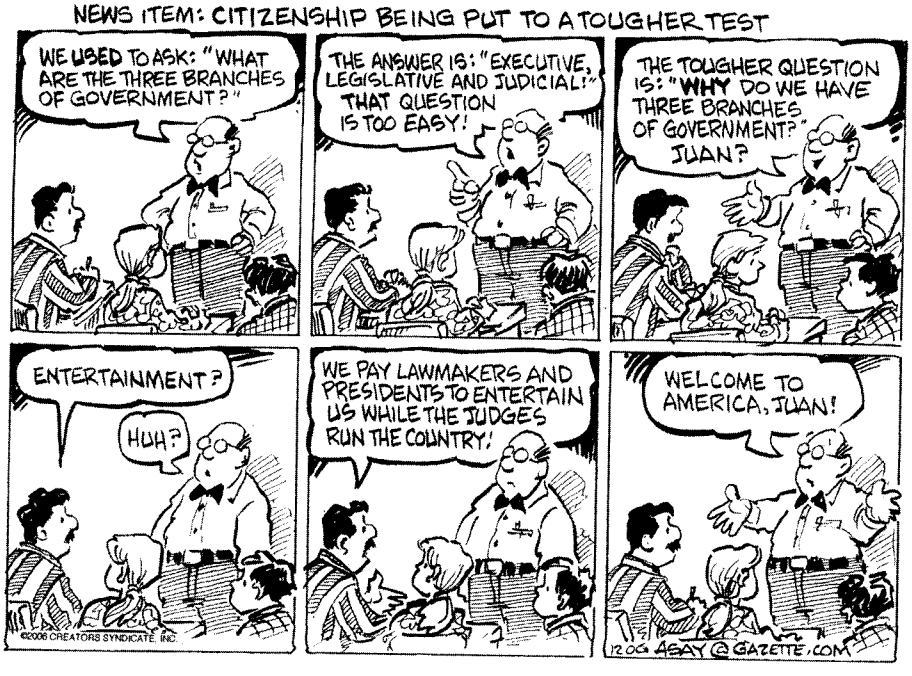
—W. H. von Dreele



"Right here, dummy!—
This *is where I see myself in five years!*"

"Pssst! French fries with real trans fats."




NEWS ITEM: CITIZENSHIP BEING PUT TO A TOUGHER TEST
WE USED TO ASK: "WHAT ARE THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT?"
THE ANSWER IS: "EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL!" THAT QUESTION IS TOO EASY!
THE TOUGHER QUESTION IS: "WHY DO WE HAVE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT?" JUAN?
ENTERTAINMENT?
HUH?
WE PAY LAWMAKERS AND PRESIDENTS TO ENTERTAIN US WHILE THE JUDGES RUN THE COUNTRY!
WELCOME TO AMERICA, JUAN!
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the long view

ROB LONG

Transcript from *Larry King Live*, December 24, 2006

LARRY KING: "Tomorrow night! The whole hour with Whoopi Goldberg and the rest of the Iraq Study Group! From Arlington, Virginia! Hello!"

CALLER: "Hi, Larry. I'd like to ask your guest if he's doing any outreach into the midget or dwarf community, following his comments?"

LARRY KING: "Good question. Santa? Inroads into the short-person community? Is there a short-person community?"

SANTA CLAUS: "As a matter of fact, Larry, there is. And believe me, had I known that, I'm sure I would have been more sensitive in my comments. But, yes, I'm reaching out to them and I plan to get together with some of the representatives from the Look Down! Organization. They've been very helpful, Larry, in showing me just how much my comments hurt people of below-average height."

LARRY KING: "But you were joking, right?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Oh, my, yes. You know, it was one of the department-store gigs—we've all seen them—"

LARRY KING: "Never went as a child. The Jewish thing. But I took my daughter to the one at Macy's and let me tell you folks, long line. *Long* line."

SANTA CLAUS: "Yes, well. Sort of a given during the season. I wish you had called me. I maybe could have done something."

LARRY KING: "Next year, sir."

SANTA CLAUS: "Anyway, I was sitting in the big chair, kids on the lap, photos, lists, that sort of thing, and, okay, this is not an excuse, but it was near the end of a long long day, and again, I'm not excusing what I did, but, you know, this is a very busy time for me and I've got, literally, a million things on my mind, and so I look down and see what I think is a six- or seven-year-old boy and I reach down and put him on my lap—and he's heavier than normal, but I think, okay, kids are a lot fatter these days, maybe that's it—"

LARRY KING: "Kids are fatter these days?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Oh, Larry, you have no idea. Fatter isn't the word. Larry, the bikes and trikes and Big Wheels I make these days have to be wider and a lot more reinforced. The Easy-Bake ovens need to be pizza sized. Did you know that I'm the single largest consumer of titanium?"

LARRY KING: "Put that in the 'news to me' file."

SANTA CLAUS: "Anyway, to continue. Suddenly I realize that he's not a six-year-old, he's just a very short man. And he says to me, something like, hey, I'm fully grown, and for some reason I find that funny, and I give him a 'ho ho ho' and I'm really twinkling away, and he looks angry and offended—as he should be, as he should be—and Larry, honestly, I just lost it. I started telling elf jokes—nail a board to their head, use 'em as an endtable, that sort of thing—and it goes on from there, and somebody has a video camera, and it hits the Internet—"

LARRY KING: "A mouse click is all it takes! It's the Wireless Interweb! Suddenly, you're on WhoTubed!"

SANTA CLAUS: "Um, yeah. Right. And so after that, well . . . I'm here. And I'm not complaining. I mean, look, Larry, I live and work among the most wonderful, accomplished, shortest people on earth. Some of my best friends are three feet tall, if that. But I guess somewhere inside me there's some anger or something that I haven't dealt with, and I think what I'm going to do—after tomorrow morning, obviously, when I have some time to do some 'me' work—is sit down and process this and reach out and educate myself and hopefully move forward from this sad episode and do some healing."

LARRY KING: "Midget, dwarf, what's the difference?"

SANTA CLAUS: "You know, Larry, I've never been sure. And maybe that's part of the problem."

LARRY KING: "From West Memphis, Arkansas, hello!"

CALLER: "I'd like to ask Santa how the elves reacted. And also thank him for the cowboy outfit in 1957."

LARRY KING: "Interesting question. Blowback from the elves?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Honestly, Larry, this has all happened so fast, I'm pretty sure the elves don't know yet. We don't get cable at the North Pole—we have a dish—and one TV in the summer wing of the dormitory, so it's just not likely that any of them have had the opportunity, or the time, to catch up on the news. But tomorrow or the next day, I'll sit them down and tell them. It'll be hard, of course, but . . . well, it'll be hard."

LARRY KING: "The caller thanked you for the cowboy outfit. Do you still give those out?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Oh, heavens, no. Since the lawsuit and the consent decree, we've pretty much shut down all of those product lines. Just too . . . controversial, I think. And anyway, in those days, we just made 'em in three sizes, small, medium, and large. But these days, with kids as fat as they are, it's all medium, large, XL, XXL, and XXXL."

LARRY KING: "Kids are that fat?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Oh, Larry, don't get me started on that subject!"

LARRY KING: "Are you afraid of the fat-person organizations?"

SANTA CLAUS: "Hey, I'm pretty fat myself! Bowlful of jelly, the whole bit."

LARRY KING: "Careful! You'll end up suing yourself!"

SANTA CLAUS: "Ho ho ho ho ho ho ho!"

LARRY KING: "This weekend! The whole hour with Cindy Sheehan and Cher!"

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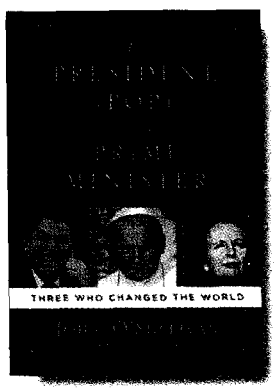
The Greats



The President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister: Three Who Changed the World, by John O'Sullivan (Regnery, 360 pp., $27.95)

MICHAEL KNOX BERAN

JOHN O'SULLIVAN does not, in this dazzling new book, indulge in schadenfreude. But he permits the reader this pleasure. "That the Soviet system has made great material progress in recent years," John Kenneth Galbraith said in 1984, when the ground was already shifting, "is evident both from the statistics and from the general urban scene." Those "in the United States who think the Soviet Union is on the verge of economic and social collapse," Arthur Schlesinger Jr. said in 1982, as the earth rumbled around him, are "kidding themselves."

Such were the orthodoxies Ronald Reagan, Karol Wojtyla, and Margaret Thatcher found and overthrew. What is striking is the brightness of spirit with which they did so. A quarter of a century later, the mood of the Right is Spenglerian. The gardens of the West, or at least of Europe, have, we are told, already closed; the specter of Islam does not merely haunt, it dominates. Very different was the mood of Ronald Reagan when Mikhail Gorbachev first looked into his eyes at Geneva in 1985. Asked what he saw in them, Gorbachev replied, "Sunshine and clear sky." The President could afford to be serene. "I know in my heart that man is good," Reagan later said, "that what is right will always eventually triumph."

Was Reagan's messianic confidence in the future of the free state naïve? Otto von Bismarck maintained that the "practical benefits" of a free constitution were "but little understood" by most people. A politics that exalts force and will, the German statesman predicted, would in almost every instance trump a free-state program. But Reagan's Freevangelical politics appears in retrospect to have been as shrewdly realistic as it was utopian. There was of course nothing original in his belief that the free system, which liberates peoples' energies, makes possible a technological creativity that no command regime can match. What was new, O'Sullivan shows, was the boldness with which Reagan translated technological advances in the West into strategic supremacy. SDI was ridiculed by the Schlesingerian clerisy; but Gorbachev saw in Reagan's brainchild an innovation that the creaking Soviet economy could not possibly equal. When Reagan, in the face of great temptation, refused to sacrifice SDI at Reykjavik in 1986, the struggle was over. "Ronnie," O'Sullivan quotes Charles Z. Wick as saying on Air Force One, "you just won the Cold War. They admitted they can't compete."

"Like a chrysalis," Reagan said in Moscow two years later, "we're emerging from the economy of the Industrial Revolution" into a world "in which there are no bounds on human imagination and the freedom to create." With his faith in the transforming power of liberty, Reagan emerges as the most visionary of O'Sullivan's trio. Mrs. Thatcher was skeptical of SDI. John Paul was skeptical of the free market. But the Prime Minister acquiesced in the President's strategy, and the Pope modified his economic theory in his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, in which he argued that economic freedom is an essential condition of human flourishing. Reagan had changed the debate; the Pope, O'Sullivan writes, "revised Catholic social teaching in the light of the Reagan-Thatcher transformation of capitalism."

The free system gave the President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister an immense material advantage in the struggle against coercion. But material causes and effects, Clausewitz observed, are "no more than the wooden handle" of a leader's sword; the moral element is the "noble metal, the real bright-polished weapon." O'Sullivan shows that his protagonists prevailed, first, because they believed in the moral superiority of their ideals, and second, because they believed that men and women around the world shared their faith in them. There was in O'Sullivan's trio no inclination to hunker in the bunker, in Fortress America (or Britain or the Vatican). The Pope was the most peripatetic of the three evangelists of liberty; but none of the three sought to wall off the West. The Communist world seemed in 1980 to be as resistant to freedom as the Islamic one does today. But Reagan, Thatcher, and John Paul were undaunted.

With his faith in the transforming power of liberty, Reagan emerges as the most visionary of O'Sullivan's trio.

Their faith in the power of freedom seemed, at the time, fantastic to many, just as it seems fantastic to many today. But the three leaders were, O'Sullivan shows, adroit in their approach to exporting the constitution of liberty. Woodrow Wilson believed that the United States could give a people a list of pedantic policy points, sponsor an election or two, and—hesto presto—a free state would emerge. This was democracy by fiat: "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men," Wilson declared.

The Wilsonian school overlooked a lesson of Lincoln, who was as keenly interested as Wilson in the world-struggle between the free state and those novel forms of coercion that German romanti-

Mr. Beran is the author most recently of *Jefferson's Demons: Portrait of a Restless Mind.*

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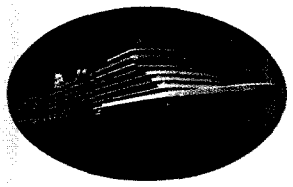

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Sun./July 29	Seattle		4:00PM	evening cocktail reception
Mon./July 30	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars
Tues./July 31	Glacier Bay	10:00AM	4:00PM	morning seminar late-night poolside smoker
Wed./Aug. 1	Juneau, AK	7:00AM	8:00PM	evening cocktail reception
Thur./Aug. 2	Sitka, AK	8:00AM	5:00PM	late-night poolside smoker
Fri./Aug. 3	Ketchikan, AK	7:00AM	1:00PM	afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception
Sat./Aug. 4	Victoria, B.C.	6:00PM	Midnight	morning seminar afternoon seminar
Sun./Aug. 5	Seattle	7:00AM		

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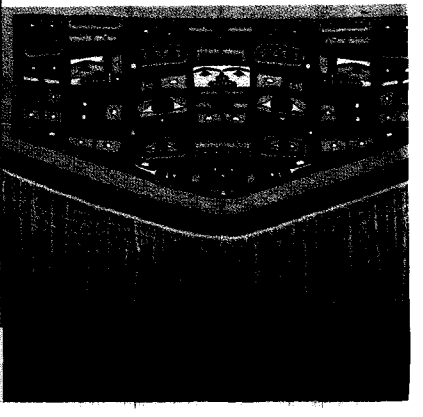

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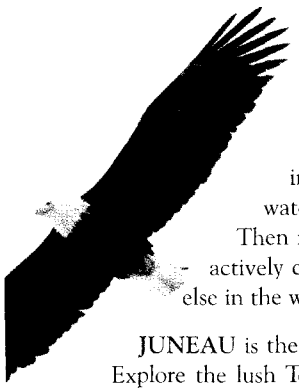

changing glacial landscape. You'll be awed: monumental chunks of ice split off glaciers, crashing into the sea, roaring like thunder, water shooting hundreds of feet into the air. Then it happens again! Glacier Bay has more actively calving tidewater glaciers than anyplace else in the world.

JUNEAU is the place to let your imagination run wild. Explore the lush Tongass National Forest. Visit the rustic shops in town. Or get out and kayak, dogsled, raft, whale watch, flightsee or fish. There's no end to the adventure because we're in port long enough to truly take advantage of the long daylight hours.

SITKA The onion domes of St. Michael's Cathedral are your first clue that Sitka was once a Russian settlement. Today, be greeted by Tlingit native people and astonishing marine life.

KETCHIKAN clings to the shores of Tongass Narrows and drapes the mountains with a cheerful air. The main attractions include Creek Street, the Tongass Historical Museum, Totem Bight State Park and Saxman Village (and a floatplane flightseeing trip to Misty Fjords National Monument is a transforming adventure not to be missed).

VICTORIA, B.C. A touch of England awaits in this beautiful port: afternoon tea, double-decker buses, and the famed Butchart Gardens (a brilliant tapestry of color spread across 50 blooming acres).

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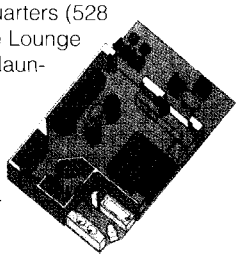
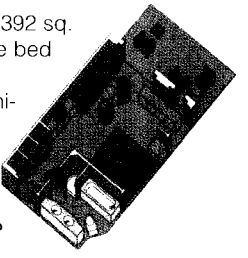
Age 18+: $1,280 p/p Ages 2 to 17: $630 p/p Infants: $370 p/p

DELUXE SUITE Magnificent luxury quarters (528 sq. ft.) features use of exclusive Neptune Lounge and personal concierge, complimentary laundry, pressing and dry-cleaning service. Large private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, and refrigerator.



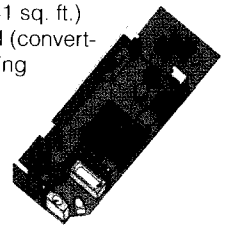
Category SA
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 5,479 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 9,799

SUPERIOR SUITE Grand stateroom (392 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows, and much more.



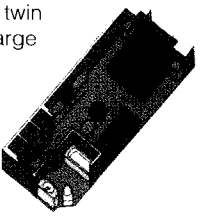
Category SS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,299 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 7,499

DELUXE OUTSIDE Spacious cabin (241 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bath with shower, sitting area, mini-bar, tv, refrigerator, and floor-to-ceiling windows.



Categories VA / VB / VC
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,699 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 5,999

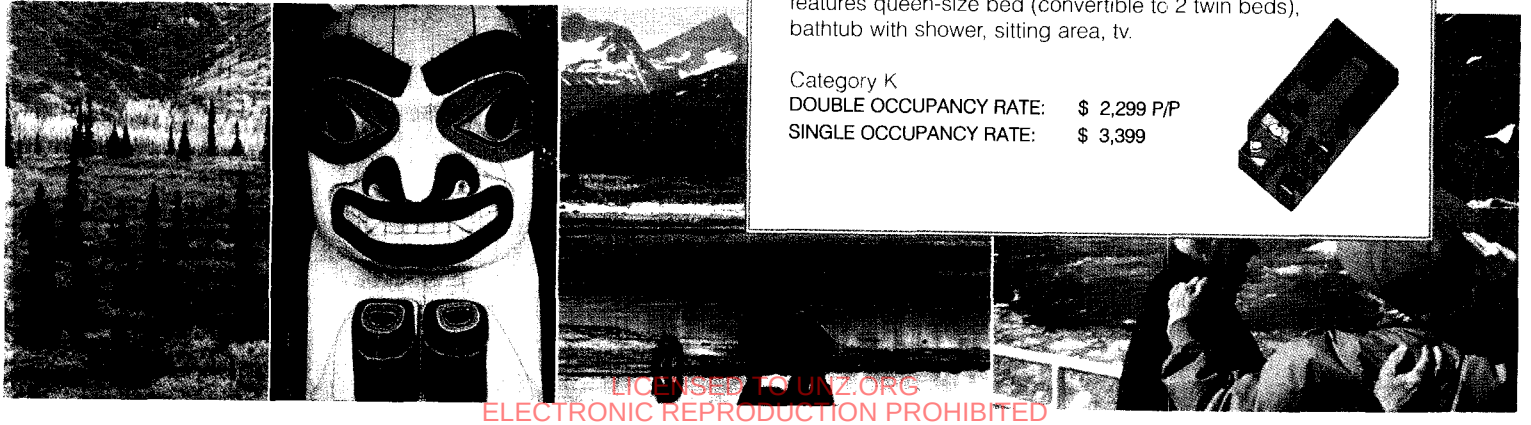
LARGE OCEAN VIEW Comfortable quarters (190 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bathtub with shower, sitting area, tv, large ocean-view windows.



Category D
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,999 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,199

LARGE INSIDE Cozy but ample cabin quarters (185 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bathtub with shower, sitting area, tv.

Category K
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,299 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,399



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cism had inspired. Lincoln, like his contemporary Bismarck, saw that romantic neofeudal paternalism (and romantic blood-and-soil nationalism) possessed a perverse appeal. He saw also that free-state politicians were slow to counter this appeal; the romantic politics that, in their different ways, Bismarck, Marx, and such American pro-slavery thinkers as Calhoun (a student of Hegel) all embraced appeared to be gaining the upper hand. Lincoln strengthened the hold of free-state principles on the popular imagination by linking them to the ongoing struggle in every soul between good and evil, and by connecting the free state to (what he argued was) a providential design in which man's better impulses would prevail. In his late orations Lincoln contended that America must suffer for having embraced slavery, an evil and despotic system. But from this evil, providence would bring forth good, would bring forth the "new birth of freedom" that Lincoln, paraphrasing the rebirth theory of John 3:3, announced in the Gettysburg Address.

O'Sullivan shows that a similar strategy underlay the efforts of Reagan, Thatcher, and John Paul to consign the last refuse of German romanticism, Marxism, to the ash-heap of history. In each of his three protagonists, O'Sullivan detects a "spiritual element" that explains their achievements. Freedom, they knew, cannot be imposed upon a people, even with bayonets; for though the impulses that give birth to a free state grow out of aspirations deep in human nature, they can bear fruit only where leaders are strong enough, and imaginative enough, to make them the foundation of a culture of liberty. With his uncanny intuition, Reagan, watching John Paul's visit to Poland in 1979, saw that a leader had emerged who could unleash the spiritual forces that make for successful free-state revolutions. "I have had a feeling," Reagan said, "particularly in the Pope's visit to Poland, that religion may turn out to be the Soviets' Achilles' heel."

Undoubtedly, the moral effort the President, the Pope, and the Prime Minister made in their quest to topple Marxism was as essential as the material one. Reagan intimidated the Soviet leadership with his arms buildup; but scarcely less did his words fill the Politburo with dread. The arresting quality of Reagan's verbal chiaroscuro was reminiscent of Lincoln's and Churchill's; in the struggle between light and darkness, the Soviet regime figured of course as the Evil Empire. This messianic or providential rhetoric, which dismayed the intelligentsia of the West, was very differently received by those who lived in slavery. "We now know," O'Sullivan writes, that Reagan's "speeches had a vital effect in weakening Soviet morale and encouraging dissidents throughout the Soviet bloc." The President's evangelism for liberty had its effect in part because the Pope had prepared the ground; had he not awakened the spirit of the Eastern European peoples, the seed might have fallen on stony places.

So successful was this strategy of moral and material maneuver that Reagan won his war, as Lady Thatcher observed in her eulogy of the President, without firing a shot. (In this respect he surpassed Lincoln; admittedly the circumstances were different.) Tolstoy said of Lincoln that we are "still too near to his greatness, and so can hardly appreciate his power; but after a few centuries more our posterity will find him considerably bigger than we do. His genius is still too strong and too powerful for the common understanding, just as the sun is too hot when its light beams directly on us." So it is, not only with Ronald Reagan, but with his partners in liberation, Margaret Thatcher and John Paul II. With great technical skill and marvelous literary craftsmanship, O'Sullivan has compiled a case for their greatness that will inspire readers for years to come. A splendid book. **NR**

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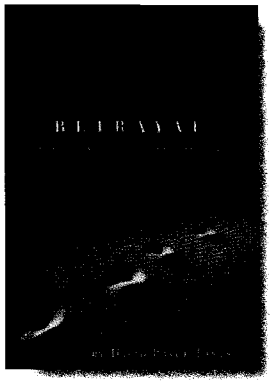
—RICHARD O'CONNELL

Scoundrel Times



Betrayal: France, the Arabs, and the Jews, by David Pryce-Jones (Encounter, 171 pp., $23.95)

DAVID FRUM

In October 1980, PLO terrorists set off a car bomb near a synagogue in Paris's rue Copernic. France's prime minister of the day, Raymond Barre, condemned the attack. Not only had the terrorists killed two Jews but "two innocent French persons" as well.

It's important to understand that Barre is one of the good guys of recent French political history: a free-marketeer, a tax cutter, a friend of NATO and the United States, a liberal in the fine European sense of that term. And yet somehow this fine and fair-minded man could perceive the murder of a French Jew as a lesser crime—or at least a more excusable crime—than the murder of a French non-Jew.

David Pryce-Jones reminds us of this story in his careful study of the tortured relationship between the French state and modern Israel. He tells it—and many others like it—to drive home a new and controversial thesis: French policy in the Middle East has been guided by emotion and passion at least as much as by calculation. A profound discomfort with Jews and a delusive hope with regard to France's position in the Mediterranean have often led France to disregard its interests as a nation and the security of its citizens.

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Another story: Haj Amin al-Husseini, the mufti of Jerusalem, aligned himself with Hitler and the Germans in World War II. He broadcast radio propaganda on behalf of the Germans and raised a division of Bosnian Muslims for the Nazi SS. At war's end, he fled Germany to seek asylum in Switzerland. Denied entry, he was detained by French police. And what did the French do with this Nazi collaborator? Pryce-Jones tells us:

> Haj Amin was housed in a villa in the Paris suburbs. With him were two secretaries and a cook supplied by the [publicly funded] Paris mosque. . . . [A French official who interviewed the mufti] approvingly . . . passed on Haj Amin's view that France and the Arab states could easily come to an accord to settle the future of both Syria and Palestine. . . . [In Haj Amin's view,] Britain was unable "to break loose from the influence that the Jewish world exercised on its politics." What Haj Amin offered, [the official] reported . . . was either a "positive" collaboration, in which case he would calm the general Arab agitation concerning [French rule in] Syria, or a "negative" collaboration, in which case he would provoke crises in Palestine, Egypt, Iraq, and Transjordan, "to the benefit of our own [French] policy."

Haj Amin was soon moved to more luxurious accommodations. He seems to have been offered money and other material benefits, including tailored clothes from Lanvin. In the spring of 1946, he was allowed to "escape" to Egypt, where he continued his negotiations with French officials. From his new home in Lebanon, the mufti instigated the murder of King Abdullah of Jordan, who had dared to seek a permanent peace with Israel after the 1948–49 war.

Helping a Nazi collaborator to provoke crises across the Middle East may seem a bizarre or even perverse way to advance French interests. But Pryce-Jones demonstrates that French foreign policy has repeatedly arrived at nearly equally perverse results in the Middle East. When Saddam Hussein banished Ayatollah Khomeini from Iraq in 1978, France welcomed the turbaned zealot. In France, the ayatollah discovered limitless freedom to agitate: As he himself later said, "We could publicize our views extensively, much more than we expected." Pryce-Jones quotes a study by Amir Taheri that the ayatollah gave 132 radio, television, and print interviews over the four months of his stay in France. He received almost 100,000 visitors, who donated over 20 million British pounds to his cause. In February 1979, the ayatollah returned to Iran in a chartered Air France jet; an Air France pilot held his elbow as he descended the steps to the tarmac.

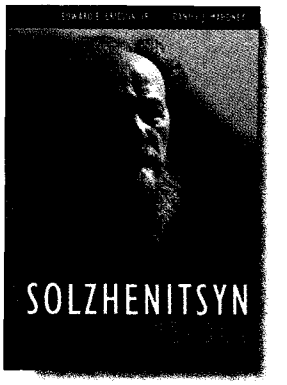
The connection with Khomeini ended sadly, of course, as had the affair with Haj Amin. Neither disappointment dissuaded the French state from pursuing its enduring romance with Yasser Arafat and the Palestine Liberation Organization. After the 1967 war, it was the Arab side that adamantly refused to negotiate a permanent peace with Israel; yet France used its seat on the U.N. Security Council to press resolution after resolution blaming Israel for the persistence of the conflict. French pressure opened the way for Arafat to address the U.N. in 1974, holster on hip. France condemned the Camp David accords of 1979 for failing to include Arafat—and persuaded the European Community (as it then was) to begin direct aid to PLO-affiliated Palestinian organizations.

Through all this, French officials and the French media maintained a propaganda barrage against Israel most memorably summarized by Ambassador Daniel Bernard's description of Israel as a "s**tty little country."

Pryce-Jones relates this history with his characteristic literary force, but without rancor or overstatement. Pryce-Jones is a man deeply at home in France and keenly aware of the best of the French intellectual tradition. He writes with sadness and regret, not anger. As readers of NR well know, his excellence as a writer is based above all on his fineness as a man: generous, humane, and fair-minded.

If this book is painful to read, it is because the underlying story is painful to tell. Yet Pryce-Jones has steeled himself, plunged into the archives, and done his job superbly. This is an indispensable book to anyone who cares about the Middle East, France, or the democratic ideals that France through the years so eloquently championed—and alas so often shamelessly betrayed. **NR**

Writer and Prophet



The Solzhenitsyn Reader: New and Essential Writings 1947–2005, edited by Edward E. Ericson Jr. and Daniel J. Mahoney (ISI, 650 pp., $30)

PAUL HOLLANDER

THIS thoughtfully edited volume succeeds in reflecting the richness of Solzhenitsyn's writings; it offers an excellent sampling of both his fiction and his nonfiction, as well as an informative introductory essay and short introductions for each selection. It goes a long way to make the prolific author accessible to readers unable or unwilling to read his entire output, and helps us assess his place in 20th-century literature and social-political debates.

Three of his major novels are represented by substantial extracts: *The Red Wheel* with 155 pages, *Cancer Ward* with 62, and *The First Circle* with 47. Close to 100 pages of *The Gulag Archipelago* are reprinted as well as 100 pages of essays and addresses plus short stories, poems, "miniatures," and other non-

Mr. Hollander's most recent books (both published in 2006) are *From the Gulag to the Killing Fields* and *The End of Commitment: Intellectuals, Revolutionaries, and Political Morality in the 20th Century*. He is currently working on a study of the literary representations of evil.

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fiction. Regrettably there is no bibliography, not even of his writings published in English.

Solzhenitsyn's major claim to fame has been the large and unique role he played in acquainting the world with the nature and worst manifestations of Soviet totalitarianism and thereby making a major contribution to its moral discrediting. Two of his early books accomplished this: *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (first published in English in 1963) and more comprehensively *The Gulag Archipelago* (first published in 1973). It is not obvious why these works had such a huge impact since they were by no means the first or only revelations about the moral outrages perpetrated by the Soviet system and especially the inhumane penal institutions it created for political prisoners. Nor was Solzhenitsyn the first to write about such matters on the basis of firsthand, personal experience. Two circumstances may explain why similar writings published earlier attracted far less attention.

By the early 1960s and '70s there was a greater willingness in the West to recognize the horrors perpetrated by the Soviet system under Stalin, since they were acknowledged and revealed (however incompletely) by Khrushchev himself in his famous speech at the 20th Party Congress in 1956. Growing evidence of the popular rejection of the Soviet system in Eastern Europe—the East Berlin uprising in 1953, the protests in Poznan, Poland, in 1956, the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and the Czech attempts to humanize the system in 1968—contributed to greater Western appreciation of the revelations Solzhenitsyn offered.

The quality of these writings is the other important explanation of their impact. They are permeated by an unusual combination of eloquence and understatement, indignation and resignation, comprehensiveness and attention to detail. These writings are not merely chronicles or inventories of human suffering and human cruelty; they also address the timeless questions of good and evil and the ways in which human nature incorporates both. Against all odds Solzhenitsyn succeeds in finding and expressing kindness and spirituality in the most inhumane settings and circumstances. His writings about the Gulag (a term he introduced to Western readers) are powerful because he is a great writer and not merely a witness determined to record, and extract some moral meaning from, the suffering he witnessed and experienced. His acute awareness of the pervasive and perplexing duality of good and evil in human beings informs all of his writings, fiction and nonfiction. He also grasps with exceptional clarity the part played by perverted idealism in the perpetration of massive political atrocities. He writes in *The Gulag Archipelago*:

> To do evil a human being must first of all believe that what he is doing is good. . . . The imagination and the spiritual strength of Shakespeare's evildoers stopped short at a dozen corpses. Because they had no ideology . . . Ideology—that is what gives evildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination. . . . Thanks to ideology, the 20th century was fated to experience evildoing on a scale calculated in the millions.

The relevance of these observations is painfully apparent at the present time, when terrorists and suicide bombers regularly murder hundreds of innocent people (and try to kill many more) with a clear conscience, motivated by religious ideologies and ideas, in the expectation of bountiful otherworldly rewards.

This does, however, create some problems for any reader of Solzhenitsyn who happens not to share the writer's religious convictions. Solzhenitsyn believes that this would be a better world if traditional religious values regulated and moderated human appetites and behavior. His critiques of modernity, of contemporary Western and, especially, American society (notably expressed in his famous Harvard commencement speech in 1978), are certainly well founded. It is indeed true that "the defense of individual rights has reached . . . extremes . . . [and that] the human soul longs for things higher, warmer, and purer than those offered by today's mass living habits . . . by the revolting invasion of commercial advertising, by TV stupor, and by intolerable music." It is also the case that modernity has undermined self-restraint, the sense of community, and the informal controls communities provide; that there is too much materialism, consumerism, competitiveness, greed, and plain self-centeredness all around us. Nor should technological progress be confused with moral progress, as even thinkers of a secular mindset agree.

Doubtless the Enlightenment philosophers overestimated the human capacity for rationality and underestimated human irrationality and the tenacity of a wide range of social pathologies. According to the enlightened liberal belief, these pathologies can be fully and satisfactorily accounted for by the environment, faulty institutions, social injustices, lack of education, economic exploitation, or political repression. Admittedly, these circumstances do help to explain some of them, to some degree. Far less debatable is that modern, secular Western societies and their secular-humanist ideology do not satisfy the spiritual hungers of human beings.

But if secular humanism and the values of the Enlightenment have failed to prevent or eradicate moral outrages and human misbehavior, so have the major world religions, Christian, Muslim, and Asian. Traditional societies, despite the prevalence of religious sentiments and regulations, were compatible with massive social injustices, inhumanities, and depravities notwithstanding their far less individualistic character and lesser preoccupation with consumption and personal happiness. There was, to be sure, less anomie, rootlessness, and social isolation, but as Leszek Kolakowski (himself a religious believer) once observed, human beings "always find reasons to treat each other badly." It is thus questionable to what degree (as Solzhenitsyn has asserted) "the concept of a Supreme Complete Entity . . . used to restrain our passions and our irresponsibility."

Solzhenitsyn also writes: "If I were asked today to formulate as concisely as possible the main cause of the ruinous Revolution that swallowed up some 60 million of our people, I could not put it more accurately than to repeat: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this happened.'" Sad to say, certain conceptions of

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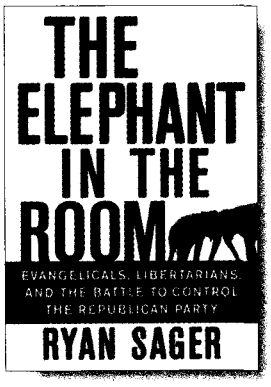
such an entity are also capable of inflaming human passions and justifying the mistreatment of "infidels" variously defined.

Further, Solzhenitsyn argues that people who had lived under Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe developed personalities "firmer and stronger" than those in the decadent West owing to "a spiritual training far in advance of Western experience." In doing so he proposes (as religious thinkers have done before) that suffering confers spiritual benefits. But the evidence is conflicting: He himself in his discussion of the Russian national character writes that "there was a meltdown of people's morals" under Soviet rule, that is to say, the hardships, deprivations, and fear did not improve their character. Perhaps certain kinds of suffering or deprivation have a more beneficial moral influence than others, but it is not easy to specify which kind. It is far less debatable that material abundance, ease of life, and the associated self-indulgence do not improve character.

Solzhenitsyn's religiosity also permeates his view of the role of the artist as morally obligated to improve the world and human beings: "It is given to the artist to sense more keenly than others the harmony of the world. . . . Even amid failure and at the lower depths of experience—in poverty, prison, and in illness—a sense of enduring harmony cannot abandon him." Only the suspension of disbelief can so readily perceive and affirm such a harmony.

Solzhenitsyn's work has, finally, to be assessed and appreciated at two levels: at one, as it reflects and reveals particular historical conditions and institutions (and especially life in Soviet society), and at the other, as it addresses the timeless and universal complexities, conflicts, and problems of human nature and social existence. His literary characters, as those of other great writers, embody the unique and the general. His religious convictions—unlike the far shallower political ones often encountered in our times—are not dissonant. They do not interfere with the strength of his art, which memorably illuminates the enduring contrasts and contradictions of the human condition. **NR**

Struggle for The GOP



The Elephant in the Room: Evangelicals, Libertarians, and the Battle to Control the Republican Party, by Ryan Sager (Wiley, 256 pp., $25.95)

DUNCAN CURRIE

Whatever one thinks of him, President Bush is a polarizing figure. His faith, his malapropisms, his cocksure strut—each is sufficient to drive certain folks batty. But the polarization of the Bush era contains a deep irony: While most liberals seem convinced Bush has governed as a right-wing partisan, many conservatives treat him as a profound disappointment, if not an outright phony.

Prior to the 2004 election a parade of books diagnosed the roots of liberal "Bush hatred." Today the new publishing phenomenon is the anti-Bush conservative. Bruce Bartlett struck first with *Impostor*. Now comes Ryan Sager, a youthful *New York Post* columnist who rails against spendthrift Republicans generally but saves his fiercest ire for Bush and Karl Rove. Sager is out to torpedo the edifice of "big-government conservatism," a pseudo-philosophy he believes has guided the Bush White House and led it astray from the values of Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater.

The "elephant in the room," Sager tells us, is this: "George W. Bush has been a tremendous mistake for the Republican party; and if the GOP hopes to remain the party of limited government, its next presidential nominee will have to repudiate, not extend, the Bush legacy." Under Bush's stewardship, he says, the GOP has become "more southern, more religious, and more working-class, and all the time more friendly toward expanding the size and scope of the state."

His book has much to recommend it for political junkies. It is briskly written and draws on an impressive array of interviews and data. There is no question that the "Republican Revolution" of 1994 has petered out, leaving behind a trail of corruption and legislative sclerosis. There is also no question that the GOP is the party of social conservatism. As for "big-government conservatism," Sager is correct that Republicans have tried to have their cake and eat it—that is, continue cutting taxes while cranking up federal spending on education, Medicare, farm subsidies, and sundry pork projects. In the process their reputation for fiscal sobriety has suffered.

Sager proposes a "renewed fusionism," with a hat tip to the late conservative icon (and NR literary editor) Frank Meyer, to "revive the best traditions of Ronald Reagan and update them with the most important insights behind the Ownership Society." While accepting the permanence of the New Deal, this initiative would also boost individualism and recognize that "libertarian means" can serve "traditionalist ends." He suggests various "fusionist" policies the Republicans might adopt: placing "a greater emphasis on civil liberties in the War on Terror"; promoting school choice; and embracing a regime of "cultural federalism," i.e., deciding issues such as marijuana legalization, gay marriage, and stem-cell research on a state-by-state basis.

One may quibble with bits of Sager's agenda, but on balance his *cri de coeur* is fair-minded and sharply argued. He convincingly documents the ascendancy of social conservatives and big spenders within the GOP. He is less convincing, however, in his evaluation of George W. Bush, and in his prescriptions for electoral success.

A quick scan of the 2006 map indicates that Democrats did not win Congress

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with social libertarianism or Cato Institute economics. They won it by blending economic and (in some cases) cultural populism with criticism of an unpopular president, an unpopular war, and an unpopular party. The chief swing voters in 2006 were not conservatives angry over the new Medicare entitlement but rather centrists, independents, and former Reagan Democrats anxious over Iraq, incompetence, corruption, and economic insecurity.

That last point is crucial. Despite robust growth and low unemployment, Americans seem increasingly worried about a panoply of pocketbook issues, including income volatility, health insurance, savings, and the consequences of globalization. Republicans must come to terms with this new landscape. Like Democrats, they must find a way to address heightened economic-security qualms without sacrificing their core principles on economic freedom.

What about *social* freedom? As Sager admits, "Any observer of the [109th] Congress will quickly recognize that many of the most socially conservative members are among the most economically conservative, and vice versa." But he insists the Christian Right is alienating libertarians. That's true. It's also true that on certain issues—Terri Schiavo, evolution, stem-cell research, condoms—religious conservatives may alienate the general public. They can at times be obnoxious and blinkered, as can their detractors.

That said, the most important electoral shift of the past three decades was the migration of evangelical Protestants, ethnic Catholics, and blue-collar populists into the Republican tent. These are the voters who made Reaganism and the Gingrich-Armey Congress possible. While their views on morality may repel libertarians, social conservatives also gave the GOP sufficient political muscle to cut taxes, reform welfare, and balance the budget. Such tradeoffs are the lifeblood of politics.

All well and good, Sager might respond, but the GOP is now hemorrhaging voters in the Interior West. To rejuvenate their strength in this region, he says, Republicans must appreciate its "socially libertarian" and "anti-federal-government" ideals. This is a keen insight: The Interior West should not be confused with the Bible Belt, and its "libertarian streak" exists.

But it is a "streak"—not a recipe for surefire political victories. As Ramesh Ponnuru has noted in these pages, the Cato Institute's 2006 "fiscal-policy report card" did not look fondly on the Democratic governors of Montana, Wyoming, Arizona, and New Mexico: They received grades of F, D, F, and C, respectively. "In Montana, we represent the values of libertarians better than Republicans do," Democratic Gov. Brian Schweitzer told Sager. But according to Cato, Schweitzer "is one of the worst new governors in the nation from a small-government perspective."

When liberals hear that Bush is not 'really' an economic conservative, they may be forgiven for pounding their fists in laughter.

Still, Sager makes a persuasive case that Democrats have a real opportunity out West. His Medicare section is less persuasive. "On the political side of things," he writes, "there can be little doubt that the prescription-drug bill has been a disaster." Well, not exactly. Failing to create the new entitlement, which most Americans supported, would have handed John Kerry a wildly popular domestic issue in 2004. As it was, Kerry crowed about the tens of millions of Americans without health insurance.

Likewise, delaying implementation of the drug benefit would only have hurt Republicans in 2006. (Not that Medicare did much to help them.) As the *Washington Post* recently reported, "Polls indicate that more than 80 percent of enrollees are satisfied." The program "has proven cheaper and more popular than anyone imagined."

Some type of prescription-drug legislation was probably inevitable. For those conservatives who crave health-savings accounts, Bush's bill was a realistic vehicle for achieving them. As one free-market health-care expert told Sager, "I cannot believe the naïveté of those who ask why couldn't we have just passed HSAs on their own." An avowed free trader, Bush also slapped tariffs on imported steel (which he later repealed). This was a nakedly political move, but one that arguably helped him secure trade-promotion authority in 2002.

Many conservatives, including Sager, cite Medicare and steel tariffs as exhibits in their case against Bush's conservatism. They point as well to the explosion in domestic spending and the resulting budget deficits. But here, again, some perspective is needed. According to figures released in October, the deficit for fiscal 2006 was about 1.9 percent of GDP. In 1983 the deficit totaled roughly 6 percent of GDP; in 1943, during World War II, it was just over *30 percent* of GDP. As Fred Barnes has written, federal spending as a percentage of GDP is lower today than it was under President Reagan in 1984.

Sager touts Reagan as the standard *par excellence* of conservatism. But as *The New Republic*'s Peter Beinart recently noted, there are several areas where Bush has been *more* conservative than Reagan. In 1983, for example, Reagan was confronted with a Social Security financing crisis. His solution? Increase payroll taxes and raise the retirement eligibility age. By contrast, Bush eagerly seized the "third rail" in a failed effort to partially privatize Social Security around personal accounts. As Beinart puts it, this amounted to "perhaps the most serious assault on the American welfare state ever."

Indeed, when liberals hear that Bush is not "really" an economic conservative, they may be forgiven for pounding their fists in laughter. Bush signed the biggest income-tax cut in 20 years. He lowered taxes on capital gains and dividends. He launched his quixotic crusade to reform Social Security (with scant help from congressional Republicans). He advanced the idea of HSAs. He won a Central American free-trade pact.

Depending on your politics, these efforts may invite praise or derision. History will judge Bush largely based on the outcome in Iraq and the Middle East. But to argue, as Sager does, that Bush is not a "committed" conservative reformer tells only half the story. Bush has been at once a profligate spender and a genuine free-market radical. In February 2005 Arthur Laffer wrote that "supply-side pro-growth economics couldn't ask for a better champion." Bush's liberal critics seem to grasp that, even if his conservative critics don't. **NR**

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■ SHELF LIFE ■

Season's Best

MICHAEL POTEMRA

HILTON KRAMER, onetime chief art critic for the *New York Times* and now co-editor and co-publisher of *The New Criterion*, has long been one of our most valuable cultural resources. In his highly readable new anthology, ***The Triumph of Modernism: The Art World, 1985–2005*** (Ivan R. Dee, 384 pp., $27.50), he presents his subject unflinchingly and with great insight. The book's "guiding ambition," he writes, "is to discriminate between the genuine and the fraudulent in cultural life."

What is essential to Kramer is that what we call modernism in art remain true to its high spiritual vocation. "Modernism," he explains, "denominates not a particular 'stance' or style—it is by disposition neither figurative nor abstract, for example—but rather a discipline: the discipline of truthfulness, the rigor of honesty." And it emerged in precisely the century that needed it most:

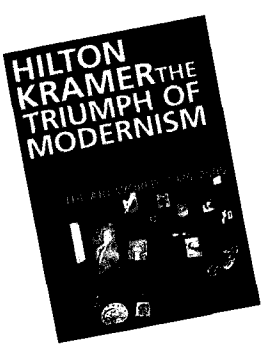
> Looking back on the history of modernism in the 20th century, what is especially striking is the violence that was directed against its achievements by the most horrific totalitarian regimes in recorded history: the Nazis in Hitler's Germany and the Communists in Stalin's Russia. And if we ask the question of what it was about modernist art that prompted such a massively destructive response, I believe the answer is clear: Modernist art was seen to provide a spiritual and emotional haven from the coercive and conformist pressures of the societies in which it flourished. Modernism represented a freedom of mind that totalitarian regimes could not abide. It is in this sense, perhaps, that the infamous *Degenerate Art* exhibition that Hitler devoted to modernist art in Munich in 1937 may now be seen to have marked the beginning of the "postmodernist" impulse.

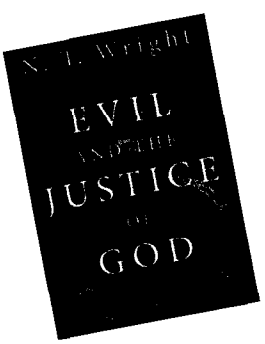
There is great wisdom about cultural history—and, more important, about art itself—in this delightful and thought-provoking book.

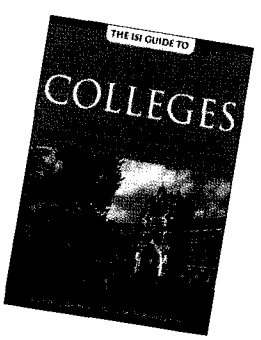
■ One of the most heartening aspects of modern ecumenism is the greater openness among Protestants to reflection on the life and example of the Virgin Mary. Tim Perry's new book, ***Mary for Evangelicals: Toward an Understanding of the Mother of Our Lord*** (IVP, 320 pp., $24), is actually slightly mislabeled: While it's written from an evangelical standpoint, it's an excellent introduction to the theological understanding of Mary not just for evangelicals but even for Catholics and indeed for any other interested readers. Perry examines in detail the Scriptural accounts of Mary, the reflections of the Church Fathers about her, and the historical development of Marian devotion in the medieval and modern periods. The New Testament, writes Perry, "does not apotheosize [Mary] in the manner that later, non-canonical writings do"; and a vibrant evangelical faith is fully consistent with an appreciation of Mary's special role in salvation history, as long as there is no confusion of her creaturely role with the "uncreated mediation of God in Christ."

This is a splendid and important book, of value to all Christians who seek to understand more deeply the truths of their faith.

■ Anglican bishop N. T. Wright remains one of the most impressive theologians of our time. In ***Evil and the Justice of God*** (IVP, 176 pp., $18), he offers mature Christian reflection on the problem of evil. The Cross, he writes, offers God's answer to the world's brokenness: "In the full outworking of the victory of the Cross God will win the final victory over the forces of evil, chaos and death, demonstrating them to be intruders into his good world and overthrowing all the power they have arrogated to themselves." Central to this outworking is the process of forgiveness: "The command to forgive one another . . . is the command to bring into the present what we are promised for the future, namely the fact that in God's new world all shall be well, and all manner of thing shall be well."







■ Your children are old enough to start looking into colleges, which means you're old enough to start despairing: Who knew that four years of beer, pot, sex, and making connections for future job opportunities could be so damned expensive? But don't give up hope: There are still a lot of schools in this country where your kids can get what used to be called, unironically, an education. The Intercollegiate Studies Institute has just published ***All-American Colleges: Top Schools for Conservatives, Old-Fashioned Liberals, and People of Faith*** (ISI, 336 pp., $22), which describes 50 schools parents—and their intellectually adventurous offspring—should certainly know about. NR

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■ FILM ■

Old World

ROSS DOUTHAT

Say what you will about Mel Gibson—and whatever you want to say, it's probably been said a few hundred times already—but he knows why people go to movie theaters. *Apocalypto*, his weird, wild, subtitled sojourn in the world of the late-medieval Maya, probably isn't to everyone's taste, but it's the work of a filmmaker who understands exactly how to use a moving image to dazzle your eye and pin you to your seat. If you'd rather watch something more sophisticated, more verbal, more *civilized*, then God bless you—that's why we've got DVD players, microwave popcorn, and the collected works of Woody Allen. But if you're interested in the kind of story best told on a wall-sized screen—and you aren't put off by a little human sacrifice and the occasional man-eating cat—then this just might be the Christmas film for you.

Apocalypto is a story of exile and return, of paradise lost and found again, compressed into four difficult days in the life of Jaguar Paw (Rudy Youngblood, part of a cast of unknowns), a young man from a hunter-gatherer tribe who is captured by a raiding party and dragged away, along with most of his village, to the capital city of the fading Mayan imperium. In Jaguar Paw's rainforest, life is good: A benign primitivism holds sway, a crunchy-conservative round of hunting and feasting, cheerful paganism and earthy monogamy. In the metropolis, meanwhile, civilization has rotted on the vine: There is famine and pestilence, deforestation and pollution, and the local elites have learned a trick or two from their Aztec neighbors and taken up human sacrifice to keep the masses happy.

Apocalypto is prefaced with a quote from Will Durant about a great civilization's decline, and so you expect the film to linger with the mobs and ziggurats, the corrupt priests and the blue-painted sacrifices. But Gibson has something else in mind. Life in the decaying empire is sketched in a few memorable strokes—the slave markets and costumed women; the heads bouncing down the temple stairs; the high priest's crowd-pleasing shtick, part Robespierre and part Jimmy Swaggart. But then Jaguar Paw slips out of captivity and heads back to the forest, with a pack of warriors hard on his heels, and *Apocalypto* gives up social commentary for the thrill of the chase.

If you're looking for subtlety or anthropological detail, in other words, you've picked the wrong crazy Mesoamerican blockbuster. *Apocalypto* is a Biblical epic crossed with an action flick, more interested in dramatizing a set of primal binaries—purity and decadence, fear and heroism, Eden and the Fall—than in exploring the complexities of pre-Columbian civilization. Or any complexities at all, for that matter. Gibson's narrative deals in archetypes: the periphery versus the empire, authentic religion versus perverted faith, the state of nature versus the chains of civilization. Jaguar Paw is the thousand-faced Hero, alternately channeling Odysseus, Achilles, and Aeneas; his wife, hidden in a quarry during the initial raid and then trapped there, awaiting her husband's promised return, is the archetype of Woman, complete with one child on her lap and another in her womb. The Mayan world around them overflows with vivid detail, but Gibson uses it primarily as a colorful backdrop to the most stripped-down, linear plot imaginable, a story that flashes by—though the movie is more than two hours long—with an almost vicious speed.

There are plenty of mistakes and missed opportunities along the way—moments when you wish the script had paused to explain a few more details (like, say, how Jaguar Paw's tribe managed to exist in blissful ignorance of the teeming, powerful empire just *two days' journey* from their village), and scenes where Gibson's showman's touch reaches well over the top. (I could have done without the plague-raddled seer child, in particular, whose tedious prophesying more or less maps out the movie's second half.) As *Apocalypto* rushes to an end, the urgency of the chase can't quite mask the feeling that a better, broader film may have slipped away—although the movie's final twist does manage to open the story out again, suggesting a wider canvas and a larger tragedy.

It suggests, too, a spiritual and artistic kinship between *Apocalypto* and last winter's brilliant and idiosyncratic portrait of the America that was, Terrence Malick's *The New World*. The two films have the same preoccupations, though they take them up in different ways, like funhouse mirrors held up to each other's visions: Gibson emphasizes collision, Malick reconciliation; Gibson is frenzied where Malick is ecstatic; rigorous where his counterpart remains resolutely vague; and (of course) he's savagely violent where Malick is dreamy and pastoral.

It's this bloodshed that has provided Gibson's critics with their principal ammunition this time around—there being no Jewish characters in *Apocalypto*, mercifully, and no Mayan version of the Jesus Seminar for him to be accused of having failed to adequately honor. The violence is certainly real, and comprehensive—a long series of impalements, decapitations, and disembowelments, with the occasional panther attack thrown in for good measure. This is not a movie for children, to say the least, and those who take their films PG-13 or tamer will find about as many reasons as there are corpses stacked around the Mayan pyramids to join the host of critics damning Gibson as a sadist, the embodiment of the very cultural decline *Apocalypto* pretends to fret over.

If all cinematic violence is to be condemned, then this seems fair enough, but I hope that those who turn away in disgust from Gibson's film will likewise disavow the carnage on display in recent war movies (from *Saving Private Ryan* to this fall's *Flags of Our Fathers*) and prestige television shows (*The Sopranos*, for instance, or *Deadwood*)—not to mention the arch, meaningless mayhem of Quentin Tarantino and his imitators, and of course the constant run of slasher-movie gore, from *Saw* to *Hostel*. Otherwise, it might seem to the untrained spectator that wanton violence *does* pass critical muster these days, and can even earn you approbation, but only as long as it's kept safely senseless or carefully ironic. It might seem, as well, that Gibson is being singled out for condemnation because his movies dare to place their violence in a moral and metaphysical context, and suggest that even agony and death might have a larger meaning, whether for Jaguar Paw or Jesus Christ.

But that's not possible, of course. Why, you might as well suggest that America's critics have something against, say, Christianity. **NR**

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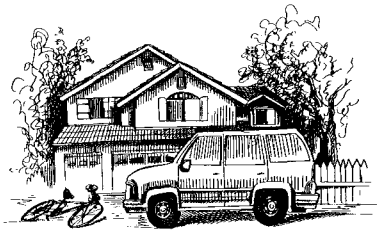
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

On the House



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

PROCRASTINATION, say the Gods of the Copybook Headings, is the thief of time. A house, says the Straggler, is just a big black pit into which, every so often, you have to tip a wheelbarrow-load of money, or the equivalent in your personal time.

Back in March we changed insurers for our homeowner's policy. My wife, always suspecting she is paying too much for any service, ever vigilant for a bargain, found a company offering a rate lower than our current one. We signed up. They sent a fellow round to tap at our joists and do things with flashlight and measuring tape in our crawlspaces. In due course a letter arrived from our new insurer. Yes, they would cover us for the advertised rate. However, coverage would not be renewed in March 2007 unless we removed the peeling, flaking 50-year-old paint from our garage, and repainted. We agreed.

Spring passed, then summer. September and October flitted by. In the last week of November I finally conquered sloth, borrowed a power washer from a friend, and set about blasting away all that old paint.

Now, as a device for decreasing local entropy—for creating order and cleanliness where there was once chaos and dirt—the power washer is a very wonderful thing. However, for the benefit of those readers who may, like me, be unable to reason the thing out a priori, I note that you cannot power-wash a large and complicated structure like a detached two-car garage without getting soaking wet. This is *not* late-November work. I should, of course, have done it in the summer. Or spring. Or early fall. Shoulda, coulda, woulda.

At last it was done. Now, with my garage girdled by about a trillion chips of Eisenhower-administration white paint in a sort of thick slurry, I bumped up against the ramparts of the fusspot state. Paint of that era contained lead, you see. Lead, if ingested, has deleterious effects on infant brains. Never mind that there are no infants in my house; nor that even if there were, they would have to scoop the stuff up and eat it in spoonfuls to attain the desired effect. Old paint is, like asbestos, one of those substances the merest grain of which is assumed, by the authorities who watch over our lives and safety, to pack the concentrated lethality of polonium-210.

A knowledgeable neighbor informed me of all this, and warned me that unless I wanted my home sealed off from the rest of the USA, to be swarmed over by agents of the Environmental Protection Agency in white protective suits and visors, wielding whatever is the lead-paint equivalent of Geiger counters, I had better dispose of those paint chips ASAP. I set to with broom, shovel, bucket, and big black plastic contractor bags. A final once-over with the power washer, a trip to the town dump, and there was not a flake of lead paint on my property.

Every couple of years something like this turns up—some issue of plumbing, or wiring, or heating, or cooling . . .

Not a flake, but still some coverage. The power washer was good, but where that old paint had the best purchase, mainly in areas protected from the weather, the surface of the shingles was still white. Further, I noticed many cracks and interstices in which paint was still loose enough to be broken away by fingernail. I began to get the sinking feeling I had signed up for one of those tasks set for wayward heroes in mythology, tasks that renew themselves just when you think they're done. Plainly I am looking at several hours' labor with a scraper and hot-air gun, followed by another EPA-forestalling cleanup.

And after all that, there will still be the repainting to do. Before March. It now being December. A different neighbor advised me that paint cannot be applied in temperatures below 40 degrees. It won't stick, he said. You'd be wasting your time, he said. So not only can I not procrastinate for a week or two on the painting, I have to monitor the weather forecasts carefully, and hope for a few dry, warm days between now and March. A half hour of Internet browsing turned up partial reassurance. Some oil-based paints can be applied below 40, though they may not actually *dry* until the weather warms. And there are specialty paints that can be applied in temperatures as low as 20.

These are the trials of the poor homeowner. Every couple of years something like this turns up—some issue of plumbing, or wiring, or heating, or cooling, or painting, or roofing, or flooring, or siding, or fencing. You can fix it yourself, if you have the time and are willing to acquire the necessary expertise, and to master the Federal Register–sized book of town building-code regulations. Or you can hire someone to do it on the cheap, in the fair assurance that it will be botched and have to be done over next year—not to mention the moral peril of finding that your cut-price contractor employs illegal aliens. Or you can kiss $10,000 goodbye and have the job done properly by a contractor who does not sport either a ponytail or a gold earring, who does not blast Death Metal at you from the radio in a dilapidated, salacious-decal-festooned truck, and whose employees speak English.

I am not short of advice here, only of will, and of tolerance for outdoor work in midwinter. Of the advice I have received, the most tempting has been to just demolish the structure altogether and enjoy 400 square feet of extra garden space. After all, my adviser said, modern automobile finishes can be left out in the weather without any degradation. What do I need a garage for? The thought of taking a 14-pound hammer to these ancient shingles and their stubborn paint is awfully tempting.

In my next life I shall attain sufficient wealth to live in a comfortable hotel, where I never have to think about paint, shingles, faucets, flooring, door seals, building codes, or the EPA. Either that, or I shall be too poor to dwell in anything grander than adobe and thatch—materials that, I feel sure, never need the attentions of a power washer. NR

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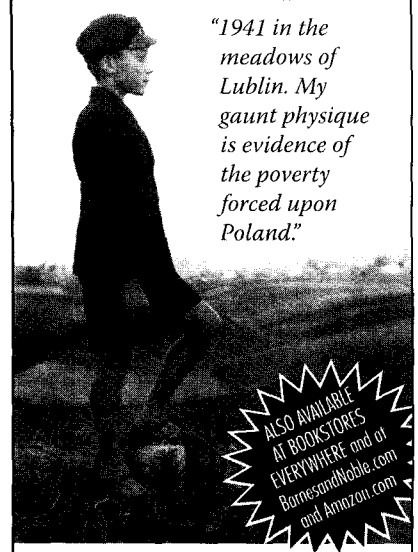

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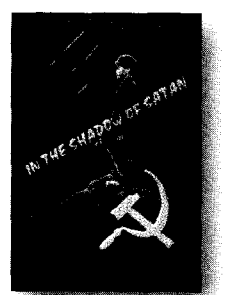

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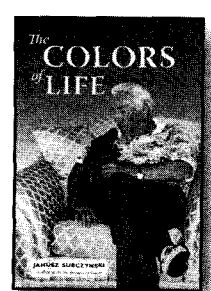

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Will the Pope Figure It Out?

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 28

By the time this dispatch is read, Pope Benedict XVI will be in Turkey. Motley groups and associations and ad hockers have gathered to protest his visit, and most of them attribute their grievances to the speech he gave in September at the University of Regensburg.

That speech was held to be as inflammatory as the Danish cartoons that silenced half of Europe for fear of being associated with humorous treatments of the Koran. The Pope does not discuss problems as grist for cartoons. Benedict XVI, we are frequently reminded, is a mature intellect and as such earns the rigorous attention paid to what he says, though less than rigorous attention is paid to what he preaches.

What he did at Regensburg was to quote a learned 14th-century Byzantine emperor who cautioned Islam against doctrines that scorned reason, inasmuch as reason mediates dogma.

It was in part surprising that the Pope provoked such a storm by saying something so eminently defensible. What was more surprising was the emergence of a new figure on the throne of St. Peter. Cardinal Ratzinger was bemoaned, when he was elected pope, on the grounds that he had been a full-time keeper of the eternal flame, and presumably would officiate as pope without sufficient diplomatic reserves.

Quite the opposite happened. In the days after making the speech, the Pope took every opportunity to stress not what had been the message of Regensburg, but the pain it had evidently caused adherents to the Islamic faith. And this theme he picked up again when he set out for Turkey. He was telling the world that his devotion to Muslims was such as to cause him terrible pain at any thought of having offended them by the use of language that appeared scornful or reproachful.

Now there were underlayers of disruption of a political character. When the Pope was cardinal, he cautioned against admitting Turkey into the European Union. His reasoning was straightforward: that Turkey, a Muslim nation, was part of a different culture from that of Christian Europe. That theme had been picked up, most directly by the former president of France, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and years have gone by without the admission of Turkey, although the reason generally given for the delay is ongoing tension between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus.

This has annoyed some Muslims, and outraged others, and here was an opportunity to add, on top of the resentments caused by the Regensburg speech, lingering resentments over the political rejection.

It isn't as simple as prescribing admission into the EU as a poultice and, finally, a cure. That is because many Muslims, while resenting the articulation of differences between western and eastern culture on matters such as marriage, sex, and alcohol, are proud that such differences exist and defend the maintenance of them. In Turkey there have been several attempts to restore Islamic law.

Should Turkey think of itself as facing East? Or West? The Ottoman Empire was, up until its dissolution, held to be an adversary of the West in its constitution. Is that still the case with modern Turkey, never mind that hard secularism was adopted almost a century ago?

What is happening in that part of the world has to do with the evolution of Islam, and nobody can persuasively contend that Islamic passions to conquer and to rule are dead. In that part of the world, attachments form under ancient dispensations, so that the Shiites and the Sunnis, and then the Kurds and Hezbollah, crowd about, expressing their resentments and tossing internecine tribal, nationalist, and credal elements into the stew.

There are those who hope that Pope Benedict will confront the maelstrom with dignity and with the strength that issues from his own faith. Or would that make too many people mad?

Season's Reflections

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 1

'Tis indeed the season to be jolly, a discipline that requires a single abstinence, which is any thought given to Iraq.

It is a good time to encourage lurking thoughts or diversions which can be important but are not driven by the day's tides. The "Critics' Choice" merchandiser for movies offers 1,000 video and DVD selections, including—not to say saturated by—explorations as gross as *West Wing*. You can have the whole of all seven seasons—45 DVDs—which can be viewed before Christmas, though permitting you no time left over for Santa Claus. One hundred twelve hours for $254.96. I stared down sadly at *Edward R. Murrow: The Best of Person to Person*, seven hours, $33.96. The jacket photo is the famous one: Ed is smiling, a lit cigarette in hand. Some will recall last year's *Good Night and Good Luck*, in which one saw, primarily, smoke—Ed's, and that of his team. You get the crazy idea, are we collecting carcinogenic materials that led to Murrow's death? How about a dust jacket featuring Martin Bormann's early-life readings derogating Jews?

Concerning whom, a few weeks ago I recorded in this space that the *New York Times* had listed 88 percent of the Jewish vote as going for Democratic candidates on November 7. Now Jason Maoz, senior editor of *The Jewish Press*, is prompted to recall that "no fewer than seven Jews . . . were members of William F. Buckley's inner circle when Buckley launched NATIONAL REVIEW, his groundbreaking conservative magazine, in 1955. . . . It remained for the next generation of Jewish conservatives—or more precisely those one-time liberal Democrats like Norman Podhoretz and Irving Kristol who in the 1970s became known as neoconservatives . . . to bring a more affirmative Jewishness to their conservative politics." Though the preponderant Democratic bias among Jewish voters at large remains unexplained.

John Derbyshire, my confederate on National Review Online, lets everything hang out, in this season of mutual confidences exchanged. He struggles for a

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category in which his devilments would naturally fall, but does not succeed—he just says that he is a "dilettante." He lists a few dozen of his idiosyncrasies. They include, "Never passed one year without consuming a tobacco product of some kind." "Never set foot in Africa, Australasia, Oceania, Central or South America." "Never responded to any of William F. Buckley Jr.'s spoken opinions with: 'I'm afraid you're totally out to lunch on this one, Bill.'" He wisely illuminates his enterprise by recalling Dr. Johnson's line, "Depend upon it that if a man talks of his misfortunes there is something in them that is not disagreeable to him." As always, Johnson has the last word.

I end by acknowledging that the season is open to entirely unexplained, let alone systematically examined, teasers. To display my own: How about a national drive to buy a chair for Wolf Blitzer when he appears on CNN?

Since we all know that CNN could come up with a chair for Wolf using its own resources, what we are really complaining about is something else. Look for the larger meaning, since there has to be a larger meaning. Somebody said to the producer, or else the producer said to somebody, "There is too affluent a feel to CNN. We must inject it with something that suggests the relevance of speed, the deliquescence of mere events, the electricity we bring to the . . . whole . . . global scene!" One after another, the company are beginning to nod their heads. "We'll have Wolf *standing* when he makes his commentary! That will confirm our psychological . . . *qui-viveness*—"

"Qui *what*?" Marjorie removed her glasses, looking up.

"Ya want that in Latin, Marjorie? What you need is a cigarette."

But all of them had now made notes, and Wolf is chairless.

Any Kind Words for Pinochet?

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 12

REPORTERS from Chile advise that two-thirds of the people celebrate his death. But thousands turned out at his funeral to mourn him. Any man who loomed large in history will find fans right to the end of the line. There is a special awkwardness in the matter of General Pinochet, who came to public life in the great and bloody days of September 1973, when he participated in the coup against Salvador Allende in Santiago.

Pinochet emerged as president of Chile and ruled for 17 years as just one more strongman. But complications were deep set. When in 1998 a nonchalant Spanish judge set in motion legal machinery intended to bring Pinochet to trial for murder the protests were thunderous. To begin with, similar legal loose cannons might hypothetically endanger the future of any former leader who ran afoul of humanrights concerns. One dissenter complained that if the Pinochet precedent prevailed, no Israeli cabinet minister could ever travel safely abroad.

But what mattered even more to some was that history should rule correctly on the Chilean legend. And there is sympathy in these quarters for Chilean dissenters from the general orthodoxy on Pinochet, who acknowledged the authoritarian aspect of his rule but defended its objectives on the grounds that he had displaced a leftist who, in the service of the Left, was prepared to overthrow the Chilean constitution.

As a conservative bystander, I found myself, in 1980, with an unusual opportunity, which was to accept an invitation to a totally private meeting with Pinochet arranged by a Chilean journalist who had long ties to the general. In a few days I was Pinochet's guest at his private apartment in Santiago.

He wore a smoking jacket of sorts, made drinks, and I was told to proceed with my line of questioning. I can maneuver in the Spanish language but had a problem with the Spanish I was hearing, and was informed by the lady intermediary that the general was using the rough dialect of his native region. I went quickly to the pivotal questions: Had Pinochet authorized killings which were not a part of the political action he had taken to remove Allende from the presidency, but rather executive exercises in power? He spoke with passion to say that he had not himself known about, let alone authorized, any of the random killings and torture laid at his door.

I was inclined to believe him.

The unfolding of the Pinochet story took many years. He was never tried, and in the last years he was too ill to act responsibly in his own behalf.

At the end his defenses collapsed at every level. It had been popular among his supporters to say that he was untouched by greed. But a federal investigation into "money laundering and foreign corruption" disclosed that he had manipulated the banking system in order to cultivate a private fortune in the Riggs Bank in Washington. The myth of an elder statesman who lived austerely on the income of a retired general came crashing to earth, and with it the entire defense structure of Augusto Pinochet. The talk now in Chile has to do with whether his former subordinates can be successfully brought down. As for the general, there is nothing left to say. Is it always so? I wondered.

In 1968, in the company of a British historian, I tried to inquire into the personal lives of the three "colonels" who had brought down the Greek government. Their rule was not protracted, and Greece quickly returned to its madcap democratic ways. But as in Chile, the Greek experiment with clean revolutions foundered, and the colonels lived out most of their lives in jail.

There was the great postwar exception, and it happened in Portugal, where Antonio Salazar exercised power without ever using it for personal debauchery. When his successor, Marcello Caetano, was overthrown in 1974, Portugal had a brief revolutionary moment, but in the end stability made its way. All that Portugal lost was its empire, but it had been losing that for 400 years.

The general rules are implacable: Power begets the abuse of it.

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

SEE SANTA!

"This 'War on Christmas' thing—there won't be a draft, *will there?"*

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

The Apocalyptic Jackpot

You gotta love these alternative theories for the murder of Alexander Litvinenko, the late "Russian dissident" (and there's a phrase one hadn't expected to make a comeback quite so soon). Relax, say the Kremlinologists (and there's another), it wasn't Putin who had the guy whacked. It was rogue elements within the state apparatus who gained access to supposedly secure facilities and then contaminated five international jets and dozens of joints all over London in order to pull off the world's first radiological assassination.

Oh, well, that's okay then. Nothing to worry about.

The late Mr. Litvinenko, on the other hand, added to the story some last-minute wrinkles of his own. On his deathbed, the former KGB agent converted to Islam and asked that one day his corpse be reburied in a peaceful and independent Chechnya.

Now what's that about? Well, like many in Russian political and media circles—including his fellow murder victim Anna Politkovskaya—Litvinenko had become intrigued by the 1999 Moscow apartment-house attacks that killed 300 people and provided the pretext for the Second Chechen War: Were they, in fact, a setup intended to advance the career of Vladimir Putin? In other words, his entire presidency is founded on a lie. One can understand why a belief in such a conspiracy might destroy one's faith in one's country, and even that it might lead one to embrace Chechen separatist leaders, as Litvinenko did. But it doesn't entirely explain the Muslim-conversion business.

I say somewhere or other in my new book that, just as the export of Russia's ideology was the biggest destabilizing factor in the last century, so the implosion of that ideology could be one of the biggest in this century. That's to say, what's left of the Soviet Union has hit the apocalyptic jackpot: The Middle East has Islamists, Africa has AIDS, and North Korea has nukes, but only Russia has the lot—a disease-riddled Slav population and a fast-growing Muslim population jostling atop a colossal nuclear arsenal. The Litvinenko murder is only the first of many stories in which Islam, nuclear materials, and Russian decline will intersect in novel ways.

There are 10 million people in Moscow. Do you know how many of them are Muslim? Two and a half million. Or about a quarter of the population. The ethnic Russians are older; the Muslims are younger. The ethnic Russians are already in net population decline; the Muslim population in the country has

Late convert

increased by 40 percent in the last 15 years. Seven out of ten Russian pregnancies (according to some surveys) are aborted; in some Muslim communities, the fertility rate is ten babies per woman. Russian men have record rates of heart disease, liver disease, drug addiction, and AIDS; Muslims are the only guys in the country who aren't face down in the vodka.

Faced with these trends, most experts extrapolate: Thus, it's generally accepted that by mid-century the Russian Federation will be majority Muslim. But you don't really need to extrapolate when the future's already checking in at reception. The *Toronto Star* (which is Canada's biggest-selling newspaper and impeccably liberal) recently noted that by 2015 Muslims will make up a majority of Russia's army.

Hmm. That'll add an interesting dimension to the Chechen campaign. Say what you like about Russia but it doesn't want for plot twists. It is, in that sense, a textbook example of Donald Rumsfeld's "known unknowns": a thing we know we don't know. What will happen in Russia? A remorseless evolution into a majority-Muslim state? Bosnian-style civil war? The secession of a dozen or so of Russia's 89 federal regions? A Muslim military coup? Or a panicky attempt to arrest decline by selling off your few remaining assets, including national resources to the Chinese and nukes to anyone who wants them? None of us knows, but we should know enough to know we don't know. The Russia of 15 years ago is already ancient history.

Which brings me, alas, to the Iraq Study Group. This silly shallow report, of which James Baker, Lee Hamilton, and the rest should be ashamed, betrays no understanding of how fast events are moving. It falls back on the usual multilateral mood music. It wants Iraq, Iran, Syria, Israel, and everything else to be mediated by the transnational jet set—the Big Five at the U.N., the EU, the Arab League. Just for starters, look at the permanent members of the Security Council: America, Britain, France, Russia, China. What's the old line on those fellows? The World War II victory parade preserved in aspic? If only.

By 2050, Russia will be the umpteenth Muslim nuclear power, but the first with a permanent seat on the Security Council. Or maybe the second, if France gets there first. And, judging from London literary offerings like George Walden's *Time To Emigrate?*, Britain might not be far behind. But, as I said above, forget the extrapolations: Already, domestic Muslim constituencies are an important factor in the foreign-policy thinking of three out of the Big Five. Are Baker and Hamilton even aware of that?

As I always say, there is no "stability." We thought we'd "contained" Soviet Communism. Instead, the social pathologies that took hold during the Russian people's half-century of "containment" will have profound consequences for us and the rest of the world long after the last Commie is dead and buried. **NR**

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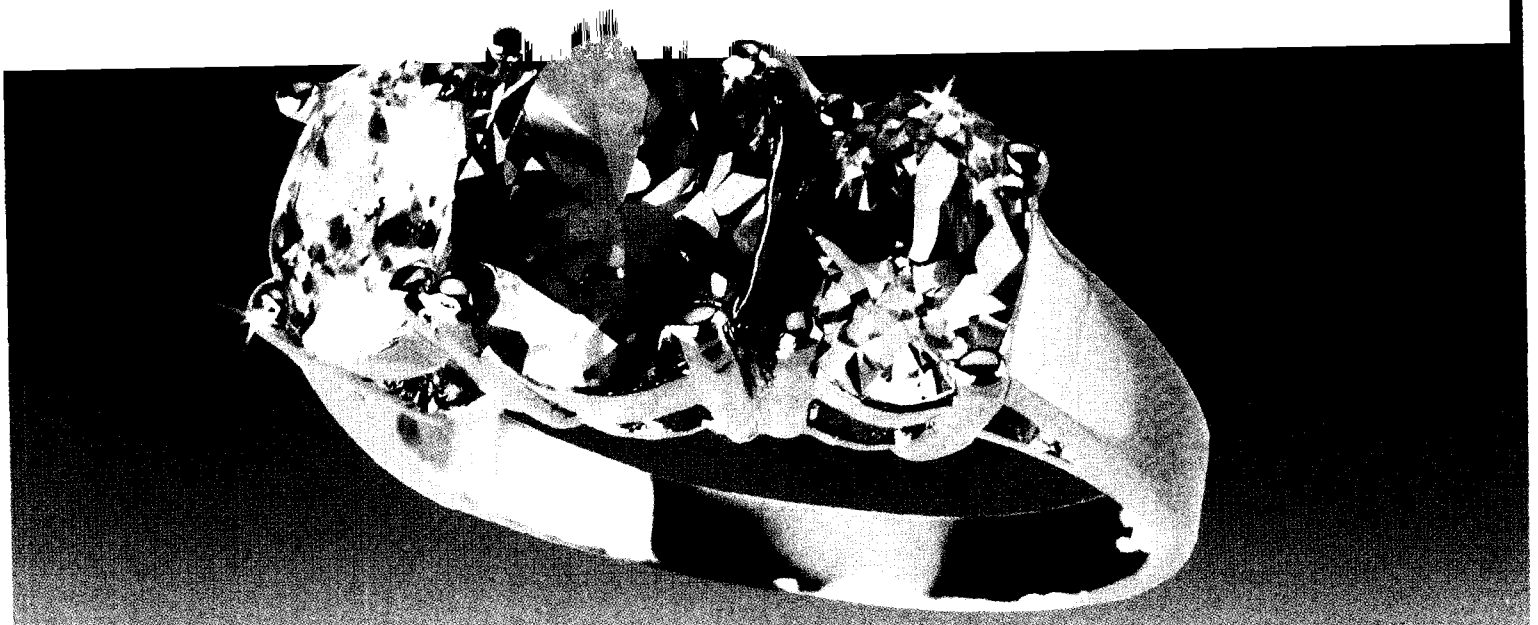

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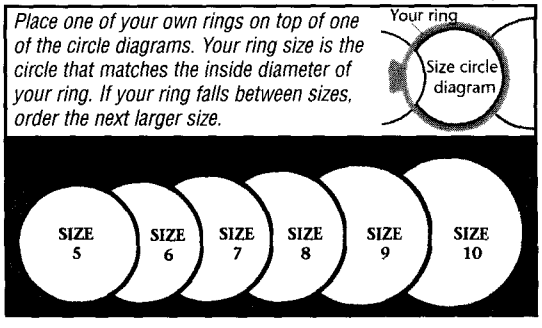

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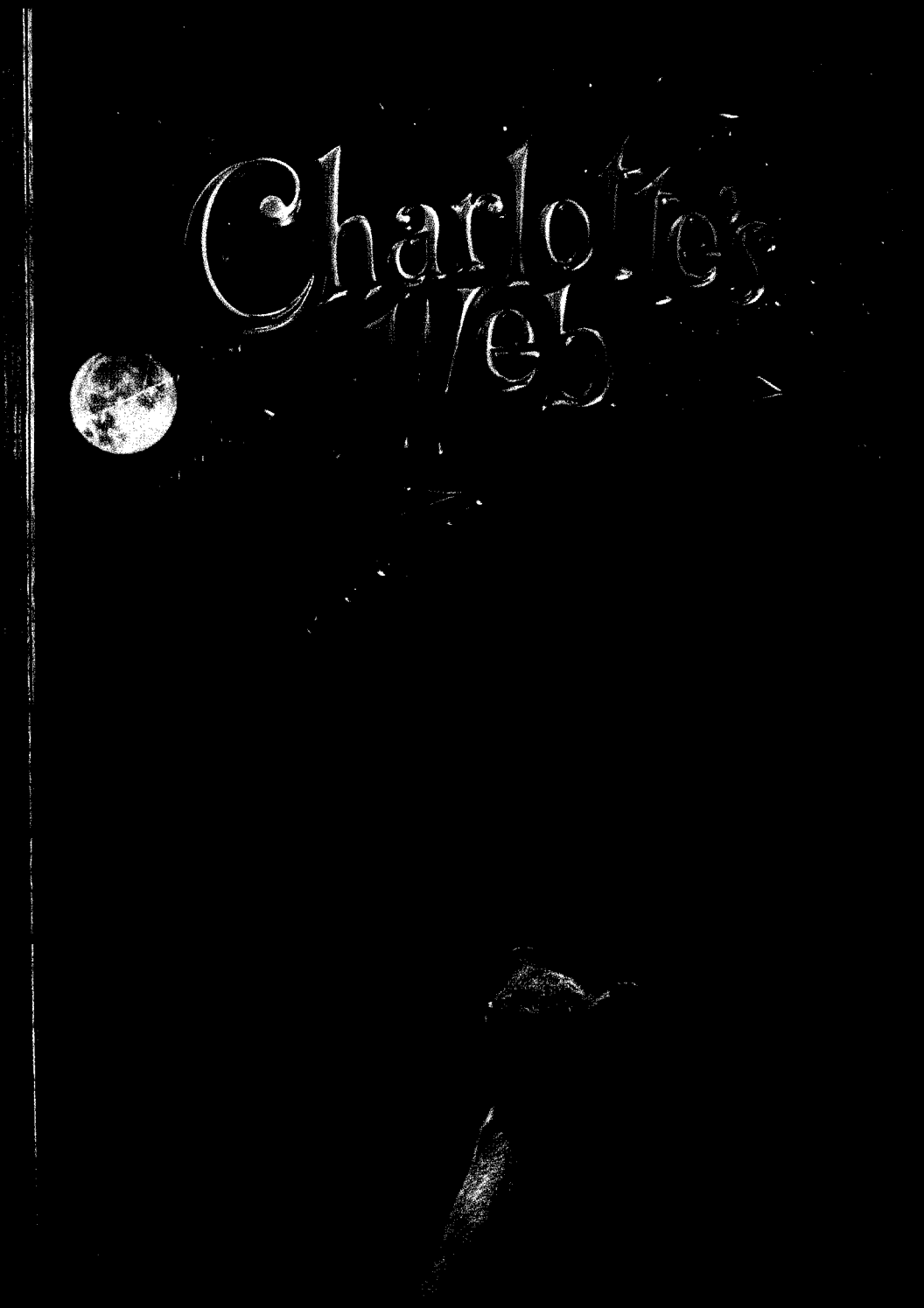

This Christmas, Help Is Coming From Above

December 2006

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